UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
AA 000 622 359 8

THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

~~Helen L. Oakman~~

~~Roslyn~~

~~Long Island~~

~~N. Y.~~

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/wilsonstalesofbo07wils

WILSON'S

TALES OF THE BORDERS

AND OF SCOTLAND:

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative.

WITH A GLOSSARY.

Revised by

ALEXANDER LEIGHTON,

ONE OF THE ORIGINAL EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS.

VOL. VII.

EDINBURGH:

WILLIAM P. NIMMO.

PF 5839
W2 W5.
v.7

CONTENTS.

		Page
THE UNKONWN	*(John Mackay Wilson)*	1
THE TRIALS OF MENIE DEMPSTER	*(Alexander Leighton)*	34
THE PROFESSOR'S TALES	*(Professor Thomas Gillespie)*	
THE NATURAL HISTORY OF IDIOTS		66
THE FLOSHEND INN	*(Alexander Campbell)*	98
LOTTERY HALL	*(John Mackay Wilson)*	130
THE DOMINIE AND THE SOUTER	*(James Wilson)*	
THE DOMINIE'S COURTSHIP		162
THE SOUTER'S WEDDING		180
ROSEALLAN'S DAUGHTER	*(Alexander Leighton)*	195
THE TWO SAILORS	*(Oliver Richardson)*	227
THE DREAM	*(Alexander Campbell)*	258

but one word that they understood, and that word was "*Edinburgh!*"

Some said, "the poor creature is crazed;" and when she perceived that they comprehended her not, she waved her hand impatiently for them to depart, and pressing her child closer to her bosom, she bent her head over him, and sighed. The peasants, believing from her gestures that she desired not their presence, left her, some pitying, all wondering. Within an hour, some of them returned to the place where they had seen her, with the intent of offering her shelter for the night; but she was not to be found.

On the following morning, one Peter Thornton, a farmer, went into his stackyard before his servants were astir, and his attention being aroused by the weeping and wailing of a child, he hastened toward the spot from whence the sound proceeded. In a secluded corner of the yard, he beheld a woman lying, as if asleep, upon some loose straw; and a child was weeping and uttering strange sounds of lamentation on her bosom. It was the lovely, but wretched-looking foreigner whom the peasants had seen on the evening before. Peter was a blunt, kind-hearted Englishman; he resembled a piece of rich though unpolished metal. He approached the forlorn stranger; and her strange dress, her youth, the stamp of misery that surrounded her, and the death-like expression of her features, moved him, as he gazed upon her and her child, almost to tears.

"Get up, woman," said he; "why do you lie there? Get up, and come wi' me; ye seem to be ill, and my wife will get ye something comfortable."

But she spoke not, she moved not, though the child screamed louder at his presence. He called to her again; but still she remained motionless.

"Preserve us!" said he, somewhat alarmed, "what can have come owre the woman? I daresay she is in a trance! She sleeps sounder there in the open air, and upon the bare

straw, wi' her poor bairn crying like to brak its heart upon her breast, than I could do on a feather-bed, wi' everything peace and quietness around me. Come, waken, woman," he added; and he bent down, and took her by the hand. But her fingers were stiff and cold—there was no sign of life upon her lips, neither was there breath in her nostrils.

"What is this?" exclaimed Peter, in a tone of horror—"a dead woman in my stackyard! Has there been a murder at my door through the night? I'll gie a' that I am worth as a reward to find it out!" And, leaving the child screaming by the side of its dead mother, he rushed breathless into the house, exclaiming, "Oh, wife! wife!—Jenny, woman!—I say, Jenny, get up! Here has been bloody wark at our door! What do ye think?—a dead woman lying in our stackyard, wi' a bonny bairn screaming on her breast!"

"What's that ye say, Peter!" cried his wife, starting up in terror; "a dead woman! Ye're dreaming—ye're not in earnest!"

"Haste ye! haste ye, Jenny!" he added; "it's as true as that my name is Peter Thornton."

She arose, and, with her household servants, accompanied him to where the dead body lay.

"Now," added Peter, with a look which bespoke the troubled state of his feelings, "this will be a job for the crowner, and we'll a' have to be examined and cross-examined, backward and forward, just as if we had killed the woman, or had onything to do wi' her death. I would rather have lost five hundred pounds, than that she had been found dead upon my stackyard."

"But see," said Jenny, after she had ascertained that the mother was really dead, and as she took up the child in her arms, and kissed it—"see what a sweet, bonny, innocent-looking creature this is! And, poor thing, only to think that it should be left an orphan, and apparently in a

foreign land, for I dinna understand a word that it greets and says!"

A coroner's inquest was accordingly held upon the body, and a verdict of "*Found dead*" returned. Nothing was discovered about the person of the deceased which could throw light upon who she was. All the money she had had with her consisted of a small Spanish coin; but on her hand she wore a gemmed ring, of curious workmanship and considerable value, and also a plain marriage-ring. On the inside of the former were engraven the characters of C. F. *et* M. V.; and within the latter, C. *et* M. F. The fashion of her dress was Spanish, and the few words of lamentation which her poor child could imperfectly utter were discovered to be in that language. There being small likelihood of discovering who the stranger had been, her orphan boy was about to be committed to the workhouse; but Mrs Thornton had no children of her own, the motherless little one had been three days under her care, and already her heart began to feel for him a mother's fondness.

"Peter," said she unto her husband, "I am not happy at the thought o' this poor bairn being sent to the workhouse. I'm sure he was born above such a condition. Death, in taking his mother, left him helpless and crying for help at our door, and I think it would be unnatural in us to withhold it. Now, as we have nae family o' our own, if ye'll bear the expense, I'm sure I'm willing to tak the trouble, o' bringing him up."

"Wi' a' my heart, Jenny, my dow," said Peter; "it was me that found the bairn, and if ye say, keep it, I say, keep it, too. His meat will never be missed; and it will be a worse year wi' us than ony we hae seen, when we canna get claes to his back."

"Peter," replied she, "I always said ye had a good heart; and by this action ye prove it to the world."

"I care not that," said he, snapping the nail of his thumb

upwards from his forefinger, "what the world may say or think about me, provided *you* and my conscience say that it is right that I hae done."

They therefore, from that hour, took the orphan as the child of their adoption; and they were most puzzled to decide by what name he should be called.

"It is perfectly evident to me," said the farmer, "from the letters on the rings, that his faither's first name has begun wi' a C, and his second wi' an F; but we could never be able to find out the outlandish foreign words that they may stand for. We shall therefore just give him some decent Christian name."

"And what name more decent or respectable could we gie him than our own?" said Jenny. "Suppose we just call him Thornton—Peter Thornton?"

"No, no, goodwife," said he, "there must twa words go to the making o' that bargain; for, though nobody would charge you wi' being his mother, the time may come when folk would be wicked enough to hint that I was his faither; therefore, I do not think it proper that he should tak my name. What say ye, now, as it is probable that his faither's name began wi' a C, if we were to call him Christopher? and, as we found him in the month o' May, we should gie him a surname after the month, and call him Christopher May? That, in my opinion, is a very bonny name; and I hae nae doubt that, if he be spared till those dark een o' his begin to look after the lasses, meny a ane o' them will be o' the same way o' thinking."

The child soon became reconciled to the change in his situation, and returned the kindness of his foster-mother with affection. She rejoiced as he gradually forgot the few words of Spanish which he at first lisped, and in their stead began to speak the language of the Borders. With delight in her eyes, she declared that "she had learned him his *mother tongue*, which he now spoke as *natural as life*,

though, when she took him under her care, he could say nothing but some heathenish kind o' sounds, which nobody could mak ony mair sense o' than it was possible to do out o' the yaumerin o' an infant o' six months old."

As the orphan grew up, he became noted as the liveliest boy in the neighbourhood. He was the tallest of his age, and the most fearless. About three years after Peter Thornton had taken him under his protection, he sent him to school. But, lively as the orphan Christopher May was (for so we shall now call him), he by no means showed an aptness to learn. For five years, and he never rose higher than the middle of the class. The teacher was often wroth with the thoughtlessness of his pupil; and in his displeasure said, "It is nonsense, sirrah, to say that ye was ever a Spaniard. There is something like sense and stability o' character about the people o' Spain; but you—ye're a Frenchman!—a thoughtless, dancing, settle-to-nothing fool. Or, if ever ye were a Spaniard, ye belong to the family o' Don Quixote; his name would be found in the catalogue o' your great-grandfathers." Even Peter Thornton, though no scholar, was grieved when the teacher called upon him, and complained of the giddiness of his adopted son, and of the little progress which he made under his care.

"Christie, ye rascal ye," said Peter, stamping his foot, "what news are these your master tells o' ye? He says he's ashamed o' ye, and that ye'll never learn."

But even for his thoughtlessness the kind heart of Jenny found an excuse.

"Dear me, goodman," said she, "I wonder to hear the master and ye talk; I am surprised that both o' ye haena mair sense. Do ye not tak into consideration that the bairn is learning in a foreign language? Had his mother lived, he would hae spoken Spanish; and how can ye expect him to be as glib at the English language as those that were learned—born, I may say—to speak it from the breast?"

"True, Jenny," answered Peter, sagely, "I wasna thinking o' that; but there may be something in't. Maister," added he, addressing the teacher, "ye mustna, therefore, be owre hard wi' the laddie. He is a fine bairn, though he may be dull—and dull I canna think it possible he could be, if he would determine to learn."

Christopher, however, was as wild on the play-ground as he was dull and thoughtless in the school-room. Every person admired the happy-hearted orphan. Good Jenny Thornton said that he had been a great comfort to her; and that all the care she had taken over him was more than repaid by the kindness and gratitude of his heart. They were evident in all he said, and all that he did. Peter also loved the boy; he said, "Kit was an excellent laddie—for his part, indeed, he never saw his equal. He had now brought him up for nine years, and he could safely say that he never had occasion to raise a hand to him—indeed he did not remember the time that ever he had had occasion to speak an angry word to him; and he declared that he should inherit all that he possessed, as though he had been his own son."

Mrs Thornton often showed to him the rings which had been taken from his mother's fingers, with the inscriptions thereon; and on such occasions she would say, "Weel do I remember, hinny, when our goodman came running into the house one morning, shaking as though he had seen an apparition at midnight, and crying to me, quite out o' breath, 'Rise—rise, Jenny!—here is the dead body o' a woman in our stackyard!' I canna tell ye what my feelings were when he said so. I wished not to believe him. But had I wakened, and found myself in a grave, I could not have gotten a greater fricht. My heart louped to my throat, just as if it had gotten a sudden jerk with a person's whole might and strength! I dinna ken how I got my gown thrown on, for my teeth were chattering in my head—I shaked like a 'natomy! And when we did get to the stackyard, there was

ye, like a dear wee lammie, mourning owre the breast o' yer dead mother, wi' yer bits o' handies pulling impatiently at yer bonny black hair, kissing her cold lips, or pulling her by the gown, and crying and uttering words which we didna understand. And oh, hinny, but your mother had been a weel-faured woman in her day!—I never saw her but a cold corpse, and I thought, even then, that I had never looked upon a bonnier face. She had evidently been a genteel person, but was sore, sore dejected. But she had two rings upon her fingers; one of them was a ring such as married women wear—the other was set wi' precious stones, which those who have seen them say, none but a duchess in this country could wear. Ye must examine them."—And here Mrs Thornton was in the habit of producing the rings, which she had carefully locked away, wrapped up in twenty folds of paper, and secured in a housewife which folded together within all. Then she would point out to him the initial letters, the C. F. and the M. V., and would add, "That has been your faither and your mother's name when they were sweethearts—at least so our Peter says (and he is seldom wrong); but the little *e t* between them—I canna think what it stands for. O Christopher, my canny laddie, it is a pity but that ye would only endeavour to be a scholar, as ye are good otherwise, and then ye might be able to tell what the *e t* means. Who kens but it may throw some light upon your parentage; for, if ever ye discover who your parents were, it will be through the instrumentality o' these rings. Peter always says that (and, as I say, he is seldom wrong) and therefore I always keep them locked away, lest onything should come owre them; and when they are out o' the drawer, I never suffer them to be out o' my sight."

In the fulness of her heart Mrs Thornton told this story at least four times in the year, almost in the same words, and always exhibiting the rings. Her kindly counsels, and the cogent reasons which she urged to Christopher why he should

become a scholar, at length awoke his slumbering energies. For the first time, he stood dux of his class, and once there, he stood like a nail driven into a wall, which might not be removed. His teacher, who was a man of considerable knowledge and reading (though perhaps not what those calling themselves *learned* would call a man of *learning*—for *learned* is a very vague word, and is as frequently applied where real ignorance exists, as to real knowledge)—that teacher who had formerly said that Christopher could not be a Spaniard, because that he had not solidity enough within him—now said that he believed he was one, and not a descendant of Don Quixote; but, if of anybody, a descendant of *him* who gave the immortal Don "a local habitation and a name;" for he now predicted that Christopher May would be a genius.

But, though the orphan at length rose to the head of his class, and though he passed from one class to another, he was still the same wild, boisterous, and daring boy, when they ran shouting from the school, cap in hand, and waving it over their heads, like prisoners relieved from confinement. If there was a quarrel to decide in the whole school, the orphan Christopher was the umpire. If a weak boy, or a cowardly boy, was threatened by another, Christopher became his champion. If a sparrow's nest was to be robbed, to achieve which a tottering gable was to be climbed, he did the deed; yea, or when a football match was to be played on Eastern E'en (or, as it was there called, Pancake Tuesday), if the orphan once got the ball at his foot, no man could again touch it.

His birth-day was not known; but he could scarce have completed his thirteenth year when his best friend died. Good, kind-hearted Jenny Thornton—than whom a better woman never breathed—was gathered with the dead; and her last request to her husband was, that he would continue to be the friend and protector of the poor orphan, and espe-

cially that he would take care of the rings which had been found upon his mother's hand. Now Peter was so overwhelmed with grief at the idea of being parted from her who, for twenty years, had been dearer to him than his own existence, that he could scarce hear her dying words. He followed her coffin like a broken-hearted man; and he sobbed over her grave like a weaned child on the lap of its mother. But many months had not passed when it was evident that the orphan Christopher was the only sincere mourner for Jenny Thornton. The widower was still in the prime and strength of his days, being not more than two-and-forty. He was a prosperous man—one who had had a cheap farm and a good one; and it was believed that Peter was able to purchase the land which he rented. Many, indeed, said that the tenant was a better man than his master—by a "better man," meaning a richer man.

Fair maidens, therefore, and widows to boot, were anxious to obtain the vacant hand of the wealthy widower. Some said that Peter would never forget Jenny, and that he would never marry again, for that she had been to him a wife amongst a thousand: and they spoke of the bitterness of his grief.

"Ay," said others, "but we ne'er like to see the tears run owre fast down the cheeks of a man. They show that the heart will soon drown its sorrow. Human nature is very frail; and a thing that we thought we would love *for ever* last year, we find that we only *occasionally remember* that we loved it this. If there be a real mourner for the loss of Mrs Thornton, it's the poor, foreign orphan laddie. Peter, notwithstanding all his greeting at the grave, will get another wife before twelve months go round."

They who said so were in the right. Poor Jenny had not been in her grave eleven months and twenty days, when Peter led another Mrs Thornton from the altar. When he had brought her home, he introduced to her the orphan Christopher.

"Now, dear," said he, "here is a laddie—none know

whom he belongs to. I found him one morning, when he was a mere infant, screaming on the breast o' his dead mother. Since then I have brought him up. My late wife was very fond o' him—so, indeed, was I; and it is my request that ye will be kind to him. Here," added he, "are two rings which his mother had upon her fingers when I found her a cold corpse. Poor fellow, if anything ever enable him to discover who his parents were, it will be them, though there is but little chance that he ever will. However, I have been as a father to him for more than ten years, and I trust, love, that ye will act towards him as a mother. Come forward, Christopher," continued he, "and welcome your new mother."

The boy came forward, hanging his head, and bashfully stretched out his hand towards her; but the new-made Mrs Thornton had his mother's jewelled ring in her hand, and she observed him not. He stood with his eyes now bent upon the ground, now upon her, and again upon his mother's ring, as she turned it round and round.

"Well," said she, addressing her husband, and still turning it round as she spoke, "it is, indeed, a beautiful ring—a very beautiful ring!"

"I am glad ye think so," said he; "she had been a bonny woman that wore it."

She placed the ring upon her finger, she turned it round again, and gazed on it with admiration. "I should like to wear such a ring," she added.

"Why, hinny, and ye may wear it," said Peter; "for the ring is mine twenty times owre, whatever its value may be, considering what I have done for the laddie."

With an expression of countenance which might be described as something between a smile and a blush, or, as the people north the Tweed very aptly express it, with a "*smirk*," she slipped the ring upon her finger, saying that it fitted as well as though it had been made for her.

Passion flashed in the eyes of the orphan. His "new mother," as Peter styled her, had done what poor Jenny never ventured to do. He withdrew his hand which he had extended to greet her, and he was turning away sullenly, when his foster-father said, "Stop, Christopher, ye must not go away until you have shaken hands with your mother." And he turned again, and once more extended to her his hand.

"Well," said she, addressing her husband, and putting forth two of her fingers to Christopher, "is it really possible that you have brought up this great boy! What a trouble he must have been—and expense too!"

"Oh, you are quite mistaken," said Peter; "Christopher never cost us the smallest trouble. I have been proud of him and pleased with him, since ever I took him under my roof; and, poor fellow, as to the expense that he has cost me, if I never had seen his face, I wouldna hae been a penny richer to-day, but very possibly poorer; for he has very often amused me wi' his drollery, and keepit me in the house, when, but for him, I would have been down at Ponteland, or somewhere else, getting a glass wi' my neighbours."

Many weeks had not elapsed ere Christopher discovered that his protector who was dead had been succeeded by a living persecutor. A month had not passed when he was not permitted to enter the room where the second Mrs Thornton sat. Before two went round, he was ordered to take his meals with the servants; and he could do nothing with which a fault was not found. He had often, after scraping his shoes for five minutes together, to take them off and examine them, before he durst venture into the passage leading to the kitchen, which was now the only apartment in the house to which he had access.

Peter Thornton beheld the persecution which his adopted son endured; and he expostulated with his better half, that

she would treat him more kindly. But she answered him, that he might have children enough of his own to provide for, without becoming a father to those of other people. Now, a stripling that is in love generally says and does many foolish things which he does not wish to have recalled to his recollection after he has turned thirty; but the middle-aged man who is so smitten invariably acts much more foolishly than the stripling. I have smiled to see them combing up their few remaining locks to cover their bald forehead, or carefully pulling away the grey hairs which appeared about their temples, and all to appear young in the eyes of some widowed or matronly divinity. I do not exactly agree with the poet who says—

> "Love never strikes but once, that strikes at all!"

for I think, from nineteen to five-and-twenty, there are few men (or women either) who have not felt a peculiar sensation about their hearts which they took to be love, and felt it more than once too, and which ultimately would have become love, but for particular circumstances which broke off the acquaintanceship; and, before five-and-thirty, we forget that such a feeling had existed, and laugh at, or profess to have no patience with, those who are its victims. We should always remember, however, that it is not easy to put an old head upon young shoulders, and think of how we once felt and acted ourselves; and to recollect, also, how happy, how miserable, we were in those days. Love is an abused word. Elderly people turn up their nostrils when they see it in print. They will hardly read a book where the word occurs. They will fling it away, and cry "stuff!" But, if they would look back upon their days of old, they would treat it with more respect. But the second love of your middle-aged men and women—call it *doting*, or call it by any other name, but do not call it love, for that it is not, and cannot be. Man never knows what love is, until

he has experienced the worth of an affectionate wife, who for his sake would suffer all that the world's ills can inflict.

Now, Peter Thornton, though not an old man, and although his first wife had certainly been dear unto him, yet he had a doting fondness for his second spouse, who obtained an ascendency over him, and, to his surprise, left him no longer master of his own house.

But she bore to him a son; and, after the birth of the child, his care over Christopher every day diminished. The orphan was given over to persecution—the hand of every one was raised against him—and, finding that he had now no one to whom he could apply for redress, he lifted up his own hand in his defence. The serving-maids who ill-treated him soon found him more than their equal; and to the men-servants, when they used him roughly, he shook his head, threatening that he would soon be a match for them.

The coldness which Mrs Thornton had at first manifested towards him soon relapsed into perfect hatred. He was taken from the school; and she hourly forced upon him the most menial offices. For hours together he was doomed to rock the cradle of her child, and was sure of being beaten the moment it awoke. Nor was this all—but, when friends visited her, poor Christopher was compelled to wait at the table, at which he had once sat by the side of Jenny Thornton, and whoever might be the guests, he was first served. She even provoked her husband, until he lifted his hand and struck the orphan violently—forgetting the proverb, that "they should have light hands who strike other people's bairns." The boy looked upbraidingly in Peter's face as he struck him for the first time, though he uttered no complaint; but that very look whispered to his heart, "What would Jenny have said, had she seen this?" And Peter, repenting of what he did, turned away and wept. Yet a sin

that is once committed is less difficult to commit again, and remorse becomes as an echo that is sinking faint. Having, therefore, once lifted his hand against the orphan—though he then wept for having done so—it was not long until the blows were repeated without compunction.

Christopher, however, was a strange boy—perhaps what some would call a provoking one—and often, when Mrs Thornton pursued him from the house to chastise him, he would hastily climb upon the tops of the houses of the farm-servants, and sitting astride upon them, nod down to her triumphantly, as with threats she shook her hand in his face; and, smiling, sing

"Loudon's bonny woods and braes."

But his favourite song, on such occasions, was the following, which, if it be not the exact words that he sang, embodies the sentiment—

"'Can I forget the woody braes
Where love and innocence foregather;
Where aft, in early summer days,
I've croon'd a sang among the heather?
Can I forget my father's hearth—
My mother by the ingle spinnin—
Their weel-pleased look to see the mirth
O' a' their bairnies round them rinnin?

'It was a waefu hour to me,
When I frae them and love departed:
The tear was in my mother's ee—
My father blest me—broken-hearted;
My aulder brithers took my hand—
The younkers a' ran frae me greetin!
But, waur than this—I couldna stand
My faithfu lassie's fareweel meetin!

'Can I forget her partin kiss,
Her last fond look, and true love token?
Forget an hour sae dear as this!
Forget!—the word shall ne'er be spoken!

Forget!—na, though the foamin sea,
High hills, and mony a sweepin river,
May lie between their hearth and me,
My heart shall be at hame for ever.'"

Now, when Christopher was pursued by his persecutor, and sought refuge on the house-tops, sitting upon them much after the fashion of a tailor, he carolled the song we have just quoted most merrily. Many, indeed, wondered that he, never having known the hearth of either a father or a mother, should have sung such a song; but it was so, and the orphan delighted to sing it. Yet we often do many things for which we find it difficult to assign a reason. There was one amusing trait in the character of Christopher; and that was, that the more vehemently Mrs Thornton scolded him, and the more bitter her imprecations against him became, so, while he sat as a tailor on the house-top, did his song wax louder and more loud, and his strain become merrier. We have heard women talk of being ready to eat the nails from their fingers with vexation, and on such occasions Mrs Thornton was so. But her anger did not amend the disposition of Christopher, though it often drew down upon him the indignation of her husband.

It has already been mentioned that he struck him once; and, having done so, he felt no repugnance to do it frequently. For it is only the first time that we commit a sin that we have the horror of its commission before us. The orphan now became like unto Ishmael; for every man's hand was against him, and I might say every woman's too. Now, during the lifetime of Jenny, he had had everything his own way, and whatsoever he said was done; some said that he was a spoiled child, and it was at least evident that his humour was never thwarted. This caused him to have the more enemies now; and every menial on the farm of Peter Thornton became his persecutor. It is the common

fate of all favourites—to-day they are treated with abject adulation, and to-morrow, if the sun which shone on them be clouded, no one thinks him too low to look on them with disdain.

For more than three years, Christopher's life became a scene of continual martyrdom. He was now, however, a tall and powerful young man of seventeen; and many who had been in the habit of raising their hands against him found it discreet to do so no more. But Mrs Thornton was not of this number; she found some cause to lift her hand and strike the orphan, as often as he came into her presence. Even Peter, kind as he had once been, treated him almost as cruelly as his wife. It was not that he disliked him as she did; but she had soured and fretted his disposition; and, unconsciously to himself, from being the orphan's friend, he became his terror and tormentor.

But one day, when the violence of Mrs Thornton far exceeded the bounds of endurance, Christopher turned upon her, and, with the revenge of a Spaniard glistening in his eyes, grasped her by the throat. She screamed aloud for help, and her husband and the farm-servants rushed to her assistance.

"Back, back!" exclaimed Christopher. "Woman, give me the rings—give me the rings!—they are mine—they were my mother's!"

Peter sprang forward, and grasped hold of him.

"Touch me not!" exclaimed the orphan; "I will be your slave no longer! Give me the rings—my mother's rings!"

Peter stood aghast at the manner of the boy. His every look, his every action, bespoke desperation. He thrust his clenched hand towards Mr Thornton, exclaiming, "Touch me not!—the rings are mine!—I will have them!"

"The muckle mischief confound ye!" exclaimed Peter, with a look of half fear and bewilderment; "what in a' the

world is the matter wi' ye, Christopher? Is the laddie out o' his head?"

"The rings—my mother's rings!" cried the orphan; and, as he spoke, he grasped more violently the hand of Mrs Thornton.

"The like o' that," said Peter, "I never saw in my existence. In my opinion, the laddie is no in his right judgment."

But Christopher tore the rings from the hands of Mrs Thornton, exclaiming, "Farewell—farewell!"

"The like o' that!" said Peter, in amazement, holding up his hands; "the laddie is surely daft. Follow him, some o' ye."

Mrs Thornton sank down in hysterics. Her husband endeavoured to soothe and restore her; and the men-servants followed Christopher. But it was an idle task. No one had rivalled him in speed of foot, and they could not overtake him.

"The time will come," he cried, as he ran, "when Peter Thornton will repent his conduct towards me. Follow me not; for the first who shall lay a hand upon me shall die."

The farm-servants who pursued him were awed by his manner, and, after following him about a mile, turned back.

"Where can the laddie have gone to?" said Peter; "he never took ony o' those fits in Jenny's time. I hope, wife, that ye have done nothing to him that ye ought not to have done."

"Me done to him!" she cried; "ye will bring up your beggars, and this is your reward."

"Mrs Thornton," answered he, "I am amazed and astonished to behold this conduct in Christopher. For more than fourteen years he has been an inmate beneath my roof; seldom have I had to quarrel him, and never until you became my wife."

The words between Peter and his better half grew loud

and angry; but, instead of describing their matrimonial altercations, we shall follow the orphan Christopher.

But, before accompanying him in his flight from the house of Peter Thornton, we shall go back a few years, and take up another part of his history.

There resided in the neighbourhood in which Christopher had been brought up one George Wilkinson, who had a daughter named Jessie. Christopher and Jessie were school-mates together; and when the other children ran hallooing from the school, they walked together, whispering, smiling at each other. It was strange that affection should have sprung up in such young hearts. But it was so.

Christopher became the one absorbing thought upon which the mind of Jessie dwelt; and she became the day-dream of his being. She was comparatively a child when he left the house of his foster-father—so was he; yet, although they became thus early parted, they forgot not each other. Young as she was, Jessie Wilkinson lay on her bed and wept for the sake of poor Christopher. They indeed might be said to be but the tears of a child; yet they were tears which we can shed but once. Young as Jessie was, Christopher became the dream of her future existence. She remembered the happy days that they had passed together, when the hawthorn was in blossom or the bean was in the bloom, when they loitered together, side by side, and the air was pregnant with fragrance, while his hand would touch hers, and he would say, "Jessie!" and look in her face and wonder what he meant to have said; and she would answer him, "Christopher!" Still did those days haunt the recollection of the simple girl; and as she grew in years and stature, his remembrance became the more entwined around her heart. When she had reached the age of womanhood, other wooers offered her their hand; but she thought of the boy that had first loved her; and to him her memory clung, as the evening dawn falleth on the hills. Her father was but

a poor man; and when many perceived the liking which Christopher May, the adopted son and supposed heir of the rich Peter Thornton, entertained for her, they said that nothing, or at least no good, would proceed from their acquaintance. But they who so said did not truly judge of the heart of Jessie. She was one of those who can love but once, and that once must be for ever. In their early childhood, Christopher had become a part of her earliest affection, and she now found it impossible to forget him, or shake his remembrance from her bosom. It was certainly a girl's love, and elderly people will laugh at it; but why should they laugh? They were the feelings which they once cherished—the feelings which were once dearest to them—the feelings without which they believed they could not exist—and wherefore could they blame poor Jessie for remembering what they had forgot?

Many years passed, and no one heard of Christopher. Even Peter Thornton knew nothing of where he was, or what had become of him—the child of his adoption was lost to him. He heard his neighbours upbraid him with having treated the boy with cruelty; and Peter's heart was troubled. He reflected upon his wife for her conduct towards the orphan, and it gave rise to bickerings between them.

Hitherto we have spoken of the unknown orphan—we must now speak of an unknown soldier. At the battle of Salamanca, amongst the men who there distinguished themselves, there was a young serjeant whose feats of valour attracted the notice of his superiors. Where the battle raged fiercest, there were the effects of his arm made visible; his impetuosity over all his enemies had attracted the notice of his superior officers. But, in the moment of victory, when the streets were lined with dead, the young hero fell, covered with bayonet wounds. A field-officer, who had been an observer of his conduct, ordered a party of his men to attempt his rescue. The life of the young hero was long despaired

of; and when he recovered, several officers, in admiration of his courage, agreed to present him with a sword. It was beautifully ornamented, and bore the inscription—

"*Presented to Christopher May, serjeant in the —— regiment of infantry, by several officers who were witnesses of the heroism he displayed at the battle of Salamanca.*"

The sword was presented to him at the head of his regiment, and the officer who placed it in his hand addressed him, saying, "Young soldier, the gallant bearing which you exhibited at Salamanca has excited the admiration of all who beheld it. The officers of your own regiment, therefore, and others, have deemed it their duty to present you with this sword, as a reward of merit, and a testimony of the admiration with which your heroism has inspired them. I have now the gratification of placing it in the hands of a brave man. Take it, and if your parents yet live, it will be a trophy of which they will be proud, and which your posterity will exhibit with admiration."

"My parents!" said the young soldier, with a sigh; "alas, sir! I never knew one whom I could call by the endearing name of father or of mother. I am an orphan—an unknown one. I believe I am not even an Englishman, but a native of the land for the freedom of which we now fight!"

"You a Spaniard!" said the officer, with surprise; "it is impossible—neither your name nor features bespeak you to belong to this nation. But you say that you never knew your parents—what know you of your history?"

"Little, indeed," he replied; and as he spoke, the officers gathered around him, and he continued—"I have been told that in the month of May, four-and-twenty years ago, the dead body of a woman was found in a farm-yard, about fifteen miles north of Newcastle. She was dressed in Spanish costume, and a child of about three years of age hung weeping on her bosom. I was that child; and I have been told that the few words I could then lisp were Spanish. The

kind-hearted wife of the honest Northumbrian who found me brought me up as her own child; and while she lived, I might almost have said I had a mother. But at her death, I found indeed that I had neither parent, kindred, nor country, but that I was in truth, what some called me in derision, '*The Unknown.*' I entered the army, and have fought in defence of the land to which I believe I belong. This only do I know of my history, or of who or what I am."

While the young serjeant spoke, every eye was bent upon him interestedly; but there was one who was moved even to tears. He was an officer of middle age, named Major Ferguson. He approached the gallant youth, he gazed earnestly in his face.

"You say that you were about three years old," he said, "when you were found clinging to the breast of your mother; have you no remembrance of her—no recollection of the name by which you were then called?"

"None! none!" answered the other. "I sometimes fancy that, as the vague remembrance of a dream, I recollect clinging around my mother's neck, and kissing her cold lips; but whether it indeed be remembrance, or merely the tale that has been often told me, I am uncertain. I often imagine, also, that her beautiful features yet live in my memory, though with the indistinctness of an ethereal being—like a vapour that is dying away on the far horizon; and I am uncertain, also, whether the fair vision that haunts me be indeed a dim remembrance of what my mother was, or a creation of my brain."

The interest of the scene was heightened by the resemblance which Major Ferguson and the young serjeant bore to each other. All observed it—all expressed their surprise—and the major, in his turn, began his tale.

"Your features, young man," said he, "and your story, have drawn tears to the eyes of an old soldier. Thirty years ago I was in this country, and became an inmate in the

house of a rich merchant in Madrid. His name was Valdez, and he had an only daughter called Maria. When I first beheld her, she was about nineteen, and a being more beautiful I had never seen—I have not seen. Affection sprang up between us; for it was impossible to look on her and not love. Her father, though he at first expressed some opposition to our wishes, on the ground of my being a Protestant, at length gave his consent, and Maria became my wife. For several months our happiness was as a dream—as a summer sky where there is no cloud. But our days of felicity were of short continuance. We have all heard of the revengeful disposition of the Spanish people, and it was our lot to be its victims. I have said that it was impossible to look upon the face of Maria, and not love; and many of the grandees and wealthiest citizens of Madrid sought her hand. Amongst the former was a nephew of an Inquisitor. He vowed to have his revenge—and he has had it. In the dead of night, a band of ruffians burst into the bedchamber of Maria's father, and dragged him to the dungeons of the Inquisition. For several weeks, and we could learn nothing of what had become of him; but his property was seized and confiscated, as though he had been a common felon. My wife was then the mother of an infant son, and I endeavoured to effect our concealment, until an opportunity of escaping to England might be found. We had approached within a hundred yards of the vessel, when a band of armed men rushed upon us. They overpowered me; and while one party bore away my wife and child, others dragged me into a carriage, one holding a pistol to my breast, while another tied a bandage over my eyes. They continued to drive with furious rapidity for about six hours, when I was torn from the carriage, and dragged between the ruffians through numerous winding passages. I heard the grating of locks and the creaking of bolts, as they proceeded. Door succeeded door, groaning on their unwill-

ing hinges, as they ascended stairs, and descended others, in an interminable labyrinth. Still the men who hurried me onward maintained a sullen silence; and no sound was heard, save the clashing of prison doors, and the sepulchral echo of their footsteps ringing through the surrounding dungeons. They at length stopped. A cord, suspended from a block in the roof was fastened round my waist; and, when one, turning a sort of windlass, which communicated with the other end of the cord, raised me several feet from the ground, his comrade drew a knife, and cut asunder the fastenings that bound my arms. While one, holding the handle of the machine, kept me hanging in the air, other two applied a key to a large, square stone in the floor, which, aided by a spring, they with some difficulty raised, and revealed a yawning opening to a dungeon, yet deeper and more dismal than that which formed its entrance. The moment my hands were at liberty, I tore the bandage from my eyes, and perceiving, through the aid of a dim lamp that flickered in a corner of the vault, the horror of my situation, I struggled in desperation. But my threatenings and my groans were answered only by their hollow echoes, or the more dismal laughter of my assassins.

"Down—down!" vociferated both voices to their companion, as the stone was raised; and, in a moment, I was plunged into the dark mouth of the dungeon. I uttered a cry of agony louder and longer than the rest; and, as my body sunk into the abyss, I clutched its edge in despair. One of the ruffians sprang forward, and, blaspheming as he raised his foot, dashed his iron heels upon my fingers. Mine was the grasp of a dying man; and, thrusting forward my right hand, I seized the ankle of the monster, who attempted to kick me in the face. With my left I strengthened my hold, and my body plunging downward with the movement, dragged after me the wretch, who, uttering a piercing shriek, as his head dashed on the brink of the fearful dungeon,

escaped instantly from my grasp, and with an imprecation on his tongue, he was plunged headlong into darkness many fathoms deep. Startled by the cry of his comrade, the other sprang from the machine by which he was lowering me into the vault, and I in consequence descended with the violence of a stone driven from a strong arm. But, before I reached the bottom, the cord by which I hung was expended, and I swung in torture between the sides of the dungeon. In this state of agony I remained for several minutes, till one of the miscreants cutting the rope, I fell with my face upon the bloody and mangled body of their accomplice; and the huge stone was placed over us, enveloping both in darkness, solid and substantial as the pit of wrath itself.

"A paralysing feeling of horror and surprise, and the violence with which I fell upon the mangled body of my victim, for a time deprived me of all consciousness of my situation; nor was it until the convulsive groans of the bleeding wretch beneath me recalled me in some measure to a sense of other miseries than my own, that a remembrance of the past, and a feeling of the present, opened upon my mind, like the confused terror of a dismal dream. I rose slowly to my feet, and, disengaging myself from the rope by which I was suspended into the vault, endeavoured to look around the walls of my prison-house—but all was dark as the grave. Recollecting the part sustained in seizing me by the wounded man, who still groaned and writhed at my feet, I darted fiercely upon him; and hurling him from the ground, exclaimed, 'Villain!—tell me or die!—where am I? or by whom am I brought here?' A loud, long yell of terror, accompanied by violent and despairing struggles, like a wild beast tearing from the paws of a lion, was the only answer returned by the miserable being. And as the piteous and heart-piercing yell rang round the cavern, and its echoes, multiplying in darkness, at length died away,

leaving silence more dolorous than ourselves, I felt as a man from the midst of a marriage-feast, suddenly thrust into the cells of Bedlam; where, instead of the music of the harp and the lute, was the shriek and the clanking chains of insanity; for bridal ornaments, the madman's straw; and for the gay dance, the convulsions of the maniac, and the sorrowful gestures of idiocy. Every feeling of indignation passed away—my blood grew cold—the skin moved upon my flesh—I again laid the wretched man on the damp earth, and fearfully groped to the opposite side of the dungeon.

"As I moved around, feeling through the dense darkness of my prison, I found it a vast square, its sides composed merely of the rude strata of earth or rock; and measuring nearly six times the length of my extended arms. As often as I moved, bones seemed to crackle beneath my feet; and a noise, like the falling of armour and the sounding of steel, accompanied the crumbling fragments. Once I stooped to ascertain the cause, and raising a heavy body, a part of it fell with a loud, hollow crash among my feet, leaving the lighter portion in my hands. It was a round bony substance, covered, and partly filled, with damp, cold dust. I was neither superstitious nor a coward; but, as I drew my hand around it, my body quivered, the hair upon my head moved, and my heart felt heavy. It was the form of a human skull. The damp dust had once been the temple of a living soul. My fingers entered the sockets of the eyes—the teeth fell in my hands—and the still fresh and dewy hair twined around it. I shuddered—it fell from my grasp—the chill of death passed over me. The horrid conviction that I was immured in a living grave absorbed every other feeling; and smiting my brow in horror, I threw myself, with a groan, amidst the dead of other years.

"I again sprang to my feet, with the undetermined and confused wildness of despair. The mournful howlings of

the assassin continued to render the horrid sepulchre still more horrible, and gave to its darkness a deeper ghostliness. Dead to every emotion of sympathy, stricken with dismal realities, and more terrible imaginations, yet burning for revenge, directed by the howlings of the miserable man, and hesitating to distinguish between them and their incessant echoes, stretching my hands before me, I again approached him, to extort a confession of the cause and place of my imprisonment, or rather living burial. Vainly I raised him from the ground—threatening, soothing, and expostulation were alike unavailing. On hearing my voice, the miserable being shrieked with redoubled bitterness, plunged furiously, and gnashed his teeth, fastening them, in the extremity of his frenzy, in his own flesh. His fierce agony recalled to my bosom an emotion of pity; and, for a moment, forgetful of my own injuries and condition, I thought only of relieving his suffering; but my presence seemed to add new madness to his tortures; and he tore himself from my hold with the lamentable yells of a tormented mastiff, and the strength of a giant who, in the last throe of expiring nature, grapples with his conqueror. He reeled wildly a few paces, and fell, with a crash, upon the earth.

"Slowly and dismally the hours moved on, with no sound to measure their progress, save the audible beating of my own heart, and the death-like howling moan of my companion. As I leaned against the wall, counting these dismal divisions of time, which appeared thus fearfully to mete out the duration of my existence, through the black darkness, whose weight had become oppressive to my eyeballs, I beheld, far above me, on the opposite wall, a faint shadow, like the ghost of light, streaking its side, but so indistinct and imperfect, I knew not whether it was fancy or reality. With the earnestness of death, my eyes remained fixed on the 'gloomy light;' and it threw upon my bosom a hope dim as itself. Again I doubted its existence—deemed it a crea-

tion of my brain; and groping along the damp floor, where my hand seemed passing over the ribs of a skeleton, I threw a loose fragment in the air, towards the point from whence the doubted glimmering proceeded; and perceived, for a moment, as it fell, the shadow of a substance. Then, springing forward to the spot, I gasped to inhale, with its feeble ray, one breath that was not agony.

"Thirst burned my lips, and, to cool them, they were pressed against the damp walls of the prison; but my tongue was still dry—my throat parched—and hunger began to prey upon me. While thus suffering, a faint light streamed from a narrow opening in the roof of the vault. Slowly a feeble lamp was lowered through the aperture, and descended within two or three feet of my head. A small basket, containing a portion of bread and a pitcher of water, suspended by a cord, was let down into the vault. I seized the pitcher, as I would have rushed upon liberty; and raising it to my lips, as the pure, grateful beverage allayed the fever of my thirst, I shed a solitary tear, and, in the midst of my misery, that tear was a tear of joy—like the morning-star gilding the horizon, when the surrounding heavens are wrapped in tempest. With it the feelings of the Christian and the man met in my bosom; and, bending over my fellow-sufferer, I applied the water to his lips. The poor wretch devoured the draught to its last drop with greediness.

"The presence and the unceasing groans of my companion—yea, the dungeon and darkness themselves—were forgotten in the one deadening and bitter idea, that my wife and child were also captives, and in the power of ruffians. If any other thought was indulged a moment, it was longing for liberty, that I might fly to their rescue—and it was then only that I became again sensible of captivity; and my eyes once more sought the dubious gleam that stretched fitfully across the wall, becoming more evident to perception

as I became inured to the surrounding blackness. Hope burned and brightened, as I traced the source of its dreamy shadows; and from thence weaved plans of escape, which, in the calculation of fancy, were already as performed; though, before reason and common possibilities, they would have perished as the dewy nets that, with the damps of an autumnal morning, overspread the hawthorn with their spangled lacework, and, before the rising sunbeam, shrink into nothing.

"But gradually my grief and despair subsided, and gave place to the cheering influence of hope, and the resolution of attempting my escape; and I rose to eat the bread and drink the water of captivity, to strengthen me for the task. For many hours, the presence of my companion had been forgotten; he still continued to howl, as one whom the horrors of an accusing conscience were withholding from the grasp of death; and I, roused from the reverie of my feelings and projects at the sound of his sufferings, hastened to apply water and morsels of bread to the lips of my perishing fellow-prisoner; for bread and water had been lowered into the vault.

"In order to carry my plan of escape into effect, for the first time, aided by the lamp that was suspended over me, I gazed inquisitively, and with a feeling of dismay, around the Golgotha in which I was immured. There lay my hideous companion, the foam of pain and insanity gurgling from his mouth; beside him the skeleton of a mailed warrior, and around, the uncoffined bones of four others, partly covered with their armour, and

'The brands yet rusted in their bony hands.'

"Although prepared for such a scene, I placed my hands before my eyes, shuddering at the thought of becoming as one of those—of being their companion while I lived—of lying down by the side of a skeleton to die! The horror of the idea fired anew my resolution, and added more than hu-

man strength to my arm. I again eagerly sought the direction of the doubtful gleam, which formerly filled me with hope; and was convinced that from thence an opening might be effected, if not to perfect liberty, to a sight of the blessed light of heaven, where freedom, I dreaded not, would easily be found. Filled with determination, which no obstacle could impede, I took one of the swords, which had lain by the side of its owner, untouched for ages, and with this instrument commenced the laborious and seemingly impossible task, of cutting out a flight of steps in the rude wall, and thereby gaining the invisible aperture, from which something like light was seen to emanate. The ray proceeded from an extreme angle of the dungeon, and apparently at its utmost height. The materials on which I had to work were chiefly a hard granite rock, and other lighter, but scarce more manageable strata.

"Several anxious and miserable weeks thus passed in sluggish succession. Half of my task was accomplished; and hope, with impatience, looked forward to its completion. I still divided my scanty meals with my companion, who, although recovered from the bruises occasioned by his fall, was become more horrible and fiend-like than before. As his body resumed its functions, his mind became the terrible imaginings of a guilty conscience. He had either lost, or forgotten, the power of walking upright, and prowled, howling round the dungeon, on his hands and feet; while his dark bushy beard and revolting aspect gave him more the manner and appearance of a wild beast than a human being.

"Our portion of food being barely sufficient for the sustenance of one, hunger had long been added to the list of our sufferings; but particularly to those of the maniac. And, with the cunning peculiar to such unfortunates, he watched the return of the basket, which was daily lowered with provisions, and frequently before I—who, absorbed in the completion of my task, forgot or heeded not my jailer's being

within hearing—could descend to the ground, he would grasp the basket, swallow off the water at a draught, and hurry with the bread to a corner of a dungeon; thus leaving me without food for the next twenty-four hours.

"It was at the period when I had half completed my object, that my companion, springing, as was his wont, upon the basket, before I could approach to withhold him, succeeded in draining off the contents of a goblet, in which a few drops of a dark-coloured liquid still remained; and the pitcher of water was untouched. The wretched maniac had swallowed the draught but a few minutes, when, rolling himself together, his screams and contortions became more frightful than before, and increased in virulence for an hour. He lay motionless a few seconds, gasping for breath; then, springing suddenly to his feet, he gazed wistfully above and around him, with a look of extreme agony, and exclaiming, 'Heaven help me!' he rushed fiercely towards the wall in the opposite direction to where I was attempting to effect my escape, gave one furious pull at what appeared the solid rock, and, with a groan, fell back, and expired.

"When the horror occasioned by his death in some degree abated, the singularity of the manner in which he tore at the wall of the dungeon, fixed my attention; and, with almost frantic joy, I perceived that a portion of the hitherto thought impenetrable rock, had yielded several inches to his dying grasp. I hastily removed the body, and pulling eagerly at the unloosed fragment, it fell upon the ground, a rough unhewn lump of granite, leaving an opening of about two feet square in the rude rocky wall, from which it was so cut, as to seem to feeling and almost appearance a solid part of it.

"My task was now abandoned. The gleam of light, which for weeks was to me an object of such intense interest, proceeded from a mere hairbreadth cleft in the rock. Taking

up a sword which lay upon the ground, I drew my body into the aperture formed by the removal of the piece of rock; and creeping slowly on my hands and knees, groping with the weapon before me, I at length found the winding and dismal passage sufficiently lofty to permit me to stand erect. I seemed enveloped in an interminable cavern, now opening into spacious chambers, clothed with crystal; again losing itself in low passages, or narrow chinks of the rock, and suddenly terminating in a slippery precipice, beneath which gurgling waters were heard to run. Hours and hours passed; still I was groping onward; when I suddenly found my hopes cut off, by the interposition of a precipice. I probed fearfully forward with the sword, but all was an unsubstantial void; I drew it on each side, and then it met but the solid walls. I knelt, and reached down the sword to the length of my arm, but it touched nothing. In agony, I dropped the weapon, by its sound to ascertain the depth; and, delighted, found it did not exceed eight or ten feet. I cautiously slid down, and groping around, again placed my hand upon the sword. Though my heart occasionally sank within me, yet the overcoming of each difficulty lent its inspiring aid to overcome its successor. Often every hope appeared extinct. Now I ascended, or again descended the dropping and crystalled rocks; now crept into openings, which suddenly terminated, and turning again, anxiously listened to the sound of the rippling water as my only guide. Often, in spite of every precaution, I was stunned with a blow from the abrupt lowness of the roof, or suddenly plunged to the arms in the numerous pools, whose waters had been dark from their birth.

"Language cannot convey an idea of the accumulating horrors of my situation. Struggling with suffocation, with a feeling more awful than terror, and with despair, the agony of darkness must be *experienced* to be imagined.

"Still I moved on; and suddenly, when ready to sink,

wearied, fainting, hopeless, the glorious light of day streamed upon my sight. I bounded forward with a wild shout; but the magnificent sun, bursting from the eastern heavens, blinded my unaccustomed gaze.

"I again found that I was free: but my wife—my child—where were they? It was many years before I learned that the nephew of the inquisitor, who had sought her hand, having died, she regained her liberty, and fled with our infant son to Scotland, to seek the home of her lost husband. Since then I have never heard of them again."

When the major had thus concluded his narrative,

"Here," said Christopher, "are two rings which were taken from the fingers of my mother—both bear inscriptions."

The old officer gazed upon them.

"They were hers—my Maria's!" he exclaimed; "I myself placed them upon her fingers. Son of my Maria, thou art mine!"

The major purchased a commission for his long-lost son; and when peace was proclaimed throughout Europe, they returned to Northumberland together, where Christopher gave his sword as a memorial to his foster-father, Peter Thornton, and his hand to Jessie Wilkinson.

THE TRIALS OF MENIE DEMPSTER.

In the contemplation of the affairs of the world, there is perhaps nothing that strikes a philosophical observer with more wonder than what has been quaintly called the mutability of truth. With the exception of some of the best ascertained laws of matter, and the evidences and sanctions of our holy religion, there is scarcely anything around us that can be said to be absolutely determined and ascertained in all its bearings—including the influential cause, in a chain extending its unseen links through many minds; the proximate cause, involved in the dark recesses of the soul of the actor; and the effects, spread forth in endless ramification through society. Men are judged of, condemned, hanged, reviled, ruined, elevated, applauded, and rewarded upon less than a thousandth part of the real moral truth that is evident to the eye of the Almighty; and it too often happens, that what seems to be best ascertained by the united testimony of many soothfast witnesses, is after all little better than a lie, or an invention of men's minds, rolled up in the clouds of prejudice, selfishness, or hallucination. This truth, of no truth, is apparent to all thinking men; and yet how melancholy is it to reflect that we are so constructed that we cannot but live and act upon the principle and practice that we see the whole, when we see only an insignificant part, that, if observed in the midst of the general array brought out by divine light, would appear not only a speck, but by the influence of surrounding evidence, changed in its nature, and reversed in its object and bearing! It was but a partial, though a striking illustration of this fact, that the murder which Sir Walter Raleigh

saw committed with his own eyes from the Tower window came to him so distorted and changed, through the medium of public and judicial report, that he could scarcely recognise in it the lineaments of the vision of his senses; for if the act he witnessed performed in the streets of London were falsified by the errors or inventions of man, how little could have been known of the motives that led to its commission! This subject, if carried out, might open up a dreadful array of the effects of man's conceit and blindness, exhibiting innocent individuals paying the penalty of death for the crimes of others; characters without a stain immolated at the shrine of public prejudice; and innocence suffering in ten thousand different ways under the cruel scorn of the bloodthirsty Chiun of a blind yet self-sufficient public. We are led into these observations by the facts of a curious case of false implication that occurred near Edinburgh many years ago, from which, besides the interest it may inspire, we may learn the lesson of that charity which our blessed Saviour laboured so much to make a ruling principle in the men of the world, but with a success that might form a melancholy theme for the fair investigations of philanthropists.

In the village of Old Broughton, situated on the north of the old town of Edinburgh, and now nearly swallowed up by the surrounding masses of architectural grandeur that compose the new town of that proud city, there lived (we love the good old style of beginning a story) the old widow of William Dempster, who long officiated in the capacity of precentor in the ancient kirk of the Tron; where his voice, loud as that of Cycloborus, stirred the sleeping power of vocal worship in the breasts of the good citizens. His voice had long been mute, not as that of Elihu, who trembled to speak to the Lord, but as that of those who lie in the mould till that day when there shall be no hindrance by the chilling hand of death, to sing the praises of the King of heaven

and earth. Yet the voice of thanksgiving was not silent in the house of the widow and fatherless, where old Euphan, as she was styled, and her pretty daughter Menie, lived that life whose enjoyments the proud may despise, but whose end and reward they may envy in vain. It may not be that it was their choice (as whose choice is it?) to be poor; but it was their wisdom to know, as expressed by old Boston, that it may be more pleasant to live in a palace, but it is more easy to die in a cottage. The characters of these individuals, who happily never dreamed of forming heroines in the "Border Tales," can be best appreciated by those who lived in the last century; for in these jaunty days, when the sun of perfectibility is beginning to dawn on the moral horizon of a once sinful world, the contentment that is derived from a trust in heaven, and the pride that is begotten of a virtue that rejoices in itself, are more often pictured by the pen of the fictioneer than found in the place and personages that be. The representations of our old painter, George Jamesone, would be true as applied to Euphan Dempster and her daughter; for the dresses of the women of Scotland underwent small change until the eventful era of the nineteenth century; but we need them not—for our faithful memory has treasured the description of our parent, who lived to set forth the old representative of the Covenanters, sitting with her linsey-woolsey gown, of green or cramosie, made close in the sleeves—the body tight, and peaked in the form of the old separate bodice—the huge swelling skirt of many folds, twined out at the pocket-holes, and open in front, to show the bright-coloured petticoat of callimankey—her round-eared mutch that served the purpose of bonnet and coif—her clear-bleached tuck, with its row of mother-of-pearl buttons running down the front—and her hose of white woollen, that disappeared at the extremities in the shoe, whose high-turned heels gave a kind of dignity to the step of the poor. The dress of the mother in those days was almost that of the

daughter, with the exception of the head-gear, which, in the latter, was limited to a band of black velvet (the *bandeau)*, to restrain the flowing locks; and, high as the word velvet may sound, there were few maidens, however poor, that wanted the small strip of the costly material that now is seen covering the whole persons of the wives of rich tradesmen.

Such were the external characteristics of the inhabitants of the old red-tiled dwelling, so long known by the name of Dominie Dempster's House, in the village of Old Broughton; and, if we will form a character out of a combination of the virtues that dignified and graced the wives and daughters of the old Cameronians, we might make a fair approach to the dispositions and habits of this solitary pair, whose earthly stay and support being gone, trusted implicitly to Heaven, for what Heaven has seldom denied to the good. The mother was one of those happily-constituted beings, whose minds are so completely formed, as it were, upon the Bible, that not only were her actions regulated by the precepts of the holy book, but her thoughts were naturally and almost unconsciously expressed in Scripture language; nor could it be said that, dearly as she loved the old defenders of our faith, who reared their temples among the mountains, and died on the altars, she imitated their speech and manners merely because she loved their virtues—she only drew from the same fountain from which they drew; and the water that slaked their thirst in the wilderness of their persecution sustained her in the hour of her privation. Obeying the holy behest, "Let thine heart retain my words," she made the religion of Christ "the life of her soul;" and that which was a part of her spirit could not fail to regulate her conversation. An heir of an ever-blessed eternity, in which she believed soon to enter, the only worldly feeling that bound her to life was her desire to see her beloved Menie exhibit the fruits of her parental culture as fair to the eye

of virtue, as the many simple beauties of her person—her blooming Scotch face, with the blue eye, and cheek that rivalled the peach in softness and colour; her mermaiden hair, and the graces of an almost perfect harmony of proportions—were to the eye of the admirer of female loveliness. And this the mother had already in part seen in the evolution of all those estimable qualities of the heart, that, when joined to physical beauty, form the fairest object among all the fair creatures of this fair but fleeting world.

It is a trite saying, that female beauty seldom brings happiness to the possessor, even when it is combined with that goodness that ought to guard the children of virtue from the evils of life: and this was to some extent verified by almost the first of the acts of our younger heroine's intercourse with the world; for she secured the heart of a lover even against her own will, and, with the unsought-for boon, got unwittingly the envy, and deep but concealed hatred, of her earliest friend and companion. The son of the farmer of the Mains of Inverleith, a property in the neighbourhood, George Wallace, had for some time been paying his addresses to Margaret Grierson, the daughter of the occupant of one of the small cottages of Broughton; and his success was in proportion to the attractions of a fine manly figure, and considerable power of that species of conversation which, with love ever on its wings, finds a ready access to the hearts of women. Though his passion had not been declared, it had, by the anticipative selfishness of the sex, been assumed and claimed by the object of his attentions; and Menie had been so far made a confidant of her companion, as to be intrusted with the secret of a love which had as yet been declared only on one side. The communication was sufficient to prevent the simple friend, even if there had been in her disposition any spirit of rivalship—a feeling which found no place in her breast—from presenting even an opportunity for Wallace discovering in her

qualities with which her companion could not have competed; and she uniformly maintained, in the presence of the lovers, a quiet reserve, which afforded pleasure to the one, but, perhaps, only tended to quicken in the other a comparison that operated in a manner contrary to the wishes of the confidant. Time, and the frequent meetings and wanderings by the banks of the Leith—then comparatively a sweet and rural stream, especially about the low grounds of Warriston and Inverleith—soon elicited the merits of the two companions; and Wallace was not slow to perceive that, fair and interesting as his first object had appeared to him, she was eclipsed in all the finest attributes of woman by her who had never taken the trouble to display her estimable properties. The reserve of the one—the result of a natural modesty, and of a strict training according to the rules of the wisest of men—set off the freedom of the other as little better than forwardness; while her excellent sense, and an inborn susceptibility of the finest and purest feelings of the sex, whether stirred by the flowers of the field arrayed in their simple beauties, or the heaven-born genius of virtue working its pleasant ways in the hearts of man, brought out, by a contrast dangerous to her friend, the defects of a character that Wallace, in his first blindness, had taken for perfections. The result might have been anticipated by all but the unwitting possessor herself of virtues of which she was unconscious; and it was with no affected surprise that, one night, when walking by the moonlight along the brattling Leith, she heard poured into her ear a strain of impassioned sentiments that ought to have been reserved for another, who had a prior and a better right to them.

The startled girl flew home to her mother, and narrated, as nearly as she could recollect, the high-flown expressions of Wallace's changed love; not forgetting to add, that the young man had declared upon his honour that he had never

declared any affection for her companion. Overpowered with sorrow for her friend, the tear glistened in her eye as she sat and told her simple tale to her mother, who lifted up her face from the open book, to observe in the delicate workings of a well-trained heart the fruits of her maternal care.

"Your sorrow for Margaret Grierson, child," she said, "is a scented offering to auld friendships; but 'when thou wilt do good, know to whom thou doest it, so shalt thou be thanked for thy benefits.' I like not the bearing and manners o' yer companion, for I hae seen in her the office o' whisperer, and the fascinations o' the singer, wha would kindle love by her smiles, and unholy discord by her wiles. Her vanity, like the gaudy streamers o' her head-gear, winnows wi' every wind but that which comes frae the airth, whar God's chastening tribulations hae their holy birth. Ye may be surprised to hear me speak thus o' ane wha has sae lang enjoyed the first place in your young affections; but my auld een hae a quick turn in them when vanity rideth abroad. She has other lovers than George Wallace, and other places and other trystin-trees than the banks o' Leith, or the auld willow that grows by the horse's pool, at the foot o' the bonny brae o' Warriston. Sorrows she for George Wallace, think ye, when she sits amang the ruins o' the hospital o' Greenside, and hears the love tale o' vanities frae the lips o' secret lovers?"

"A' that's new to me, mother," answered the daughter. "I never dreamed that Peggy had ony ither than George. Wha are they, and how cam ye by the knowledge?"

"Never mind, Menie," said the mother, "how I cam by the knowledge. Though my eyes, like Jeremiah's, are auld, and do fail with tears, I hae neither the blindness o' the mole nor the deafness o' the adder. But let thae things alone; we hae nae right to pry into the secrets o' our neighbours' ways, albeit they may savour o' the vanities o' Baal.

It is enough for me that I warn ye against the 'lamps o' fire' that scorch as well as light. George Wallace is a rich and an honest man's son; and if, as I believe, he has plighted nae troth with the follower o' vanities and double-loves, ye're no bound to reject his affections. Can your heart receive him, Menie?"

"Ou ay," replied the maiden, as she held down her head, and seemed afraid of the strange sounds of her own words. "I hae seen nae man yet like George Wallace, and I hae chided my puir heart for sometimes envying Peggy o' his affections. But are we not told to change not a freend for the gold of Ophir?"

"Surely, child," responded the mother—"a true freend o' God's election is better than fine gold; but she who seeketh vanity understands not the name o' freendship, and her kisses are as those o' the serpent. Seek nae mair the society o' Margaret Grierson; leave her to her secret thoughts and secret lovers, and turn your heart to him wha has routh o' means to support ye, and whase love is the love o' the heart that kens nae guile."

The counsel of her parent was ever a law to the daughter; but there was something in the advice she now gave that exercised an influence over Menie's heart, or rather there was something in the heart itself, of a nature hitherto unknown to its possessor, that acknowledged and recognised the influence as more congenial to her feelings than any authority of spoken wisdom (though founded on the words of the son of Sirach) she had yet submitted to. The secret of this feeling lay in the well-springs of an affection that had been pent up by her sense of honour; but now, when she found that she was justified in giving her heart its natural freedom to love the choice of her judgment, she lent in aid of its operations the creations of a young and glowing fancy, which soon pictured so many exquisite forms of beauty, both of mind and person, in the object of her rising affection,

that, before another morning had dawned on her, she had become versant in the secret and sweet mystery of sighs and throbbings, hopes, fears, and aspirations, of experienced lovers. She now wished as ardently for another meeting with Wallace, as she had done for a separation on the occasion of their last interview. Nor did she wish in vain; for he, with a passion roused into a warmer flame by her resisting coyness and startled apprehension, sought her anxiously, to renew his suit, and remove all the scruples of conscience that lay in the way of a passion to be, as he hoped, returned. He little knew that part of the work had been already done to his hand by a mother's cherished counsel; and his joy may be more easily conceived than expressed, even by the electric words of love's inspired power, when he found that Menie not only loved him, but conceived she had a good title to repay him with a warmth of affection equal to that of his own. He was now a frequent visiter at her mother's house; and though he knew that all his motions were watched by her whom he had thus abruptly, though, perhaps, not without just cause, forsaken, he kept steady in his new attachment, and avowed openly a love of which the best man of his station in Scotland might have been proud.

The affection that is hallowed by the blessing of such a parent as Menie's possessed a good title to be excepted from the ordinary proverbial fate of the loves of the humble; but, unfortunately, the adverse circumstances, that, like harpies, follow the victims of the tender passion, acknowledged no limit to the sources from which they spring. The rejected maiden pursued her successful rival with all the bitterness of disappointment and envy; odious calumnies were fabricated, given to the tongue of inveterate scandal, and found their way to the sensitive ear of her whom they were intended to ruin. Unacquainted with the ways of a bad world, every individual in which she judged by the test

of her own pure feeling—the universal error of young and unchilled hearts—her pain was equalled by her surprise, and she sought consolation on the breast of her lover, as they reclined upon the sloping and wood-covered banks of Inverleith.

"I hae bought ye dearly," said she, as she looked up in his face through her tears, "when, for your love, I paid the peace o' mind that was never troubled with the breath o' a dishonourable suspicion. The hail o' Broughton rings with the report that I betrayed my freend to secure your affections, and that I am unworthy o' them, as being a follower o' unlawful loves. My eyes hae never been dry since my heart was struck with the false charge. I hae looked to heaven, and found nae relief. My mother has tried to comfort me, by telling me o' the waes o' Ane higher than mortal man, wha was pursued to the death by envy and malice, and wha yet triumphed. You, George, hae alane the power to comfort me. Tell me that ye heed them not, and I will yet try to hold up my head among the honest daughters o' men."

"If ye heed them as little's I heed them, Menie," replied he, "there will be sma skaith though muckle scorn. Dry up your tears, love, and tell me if it is true" (and he laughed in playful mockery of her fears) "that you keep the weekly tryst, by the elm in Leith Loan, with the notorious Mike M'Intyre, the city guardsman?"

'George, George!—Oh man, how can ye mak light o' the sorrows o' yer ain Menie?" said the girl, as she heard the calumny come from the lips of her lover. "That is Margaret Grierson's charge against me; and, if ye knew that every word o' the falsehood gaes to my heart like the tongue o' the deaf adder—ay, even though they come on the wings o' yer playfu laugh—ye wad rather gie me the tears o' your pity than the consolation o' your mirth."

"And what better way, Menie, could I tak to prove my

faith in my love's honesty," said he, as he clasped her in his arms, "than by dispersing the poisoned lie by the breath o' a hearty laugh. Nae mair o't—nae mair o't, Menie—I believe it not; and that ye may hae some faith in my statement, I'll put a question to ye. Will ye answer me fairly, wi' the truth and sincerity that your mother draws frae the fountain o' a' guidness—her auld Bible—and pours into yer heart in the dreary hour o' late, even as ye retire into the keepin o' Him who looks down on sleepin innocence with the eye of love?"

"Ay will I, George," answered the maiden, "with the openness and sincerity with which I lay my sins on the footstool o' Heaven's mercy."

"Will ye consent to be George Wallace's wife on Fastern's E'en, and leave the city guardsman to your rival?"

"I am already yours, George," answered she, as she buried her head in his bosom, to conceal her blushes—"I am already yours, by a plighted faith that never will be broken; and it may be even as you say; but I wish nae ill to my enemies, and will spae nae waur fortune to Margaret Grierson, wha has injured me, than that she may get as guid a husband as you will, I trust, be to me."

"Kind, guid creature!" responded Wallace. "If the first part o' yer answer maks ye mine for life, the ither proves that ye are worthy o' me; for she wha wishes nae ill to her enemies will never do wrang by her freends. Gae and report to your mother what I hae said. The time is yet distant: but hope gies light wings to the hours o' lovers."

The two parted; and Menie, seeking the nearest way to her home, hurried along, her heart beating high with unutterable emotions, and with all the pain she had felt from the evil reports of her rival drowned in the intoxicating pleasure of being the betrothed of the man she loved. The moon, which had been throwing her silver light o'er the

dark foliage that overhung the Leith, and catching a look of her own face in the waters through the opening branches, was now half-concealed behind a cloud; and as the maiden passed along by the side of the stream, she required to restrain the flutter of her spirits, to enable her to thread her way by the narrow footpath. The ecstatic emotions of her novel situation, and the hurry of her progress, made her breathless, and she paused to recover herself, when she observed two individuals sitting by the side of the water. A loud laugh struck her ear; and she did not require to speculate as to the individuals from whom it came—for a voice she too well knew followed, with words of reproach that shook her to the heart. It was that of her former companion; and a glance satisfied her that she was in the society of that very individual, M'Intyre, the city guardsman, with whose name her own had been so cruelly and invidiously connected. In an instant the notorious individual was by her side.

"I've waited for ye, Menie," he began, "till the mune has waned and sunk behind the Pentlands. How hae ye been sae lang, woman, when ye ken sae weel the impatience o' a true lover, and that I maun be on the city watch on the morrow, and canna meet ye? Mak amends, and let us roam a wee amang the birken woods, whar the absence o' the mune will be nae hindrance to our loves."

And before she could reply, he had his arms round her neck, and was pulling her away among the trees. The apparition of the very individual of whom she had been conversing with Wallace, and whose name was a terror to her, with the fearful consciousness of the pollution of his embrace, took away from her all power of resistance; her knees trembled; she tried to reply to him, but could not; and a weak scream, that almost died in her throat, was the only show of ineffectual resistance she could oppose to his efforts. A few minutes enabled her to rally her powers;

and she had turned to wrest herself from his arms, when she saw Wallace standing at a little distance among the trees. He had that very instant come up; and there was something in the cool, piercing look he threw at her, that repressed the inchoate scream for relief that she struggled to utter; and the hands she held out to him imploring his succour fell nerveless within the grasp of the man who held her. Upon the point of fainting, she would have sunk to the ground, had she not been upheld by the force of her tormentor; and, in turning her eyes again in the direction of Wallace, she observed he had vanished. The scream, no longer restrained, burst forth; but it came too late; for, if Wallace heard it in his retreat, he might justly attribute it to his own appearance at a time when he might suppose himself an unwelcome intruder. At that moment two men came in sight; and the city guardsman, probably afraid of being recognised, released her from his grasp, and retreated to the position he had left by the side of her who sat awaiting in laughter for his arrival.

The instant she was liberated, the frightened maiden flew with the speed of terror homewards—all her energies wound up in the mere effort to increase her irregular progress, and without the capability of feeling the true and fearful circumstances of her position. Arrived at her mother's house, she sprang forward in a state bordering on despair, and threw herself on a chair by the side of the fire, opposite to her parent, who was engaged in her usual evening exercise of searching the inspired volume for the balm of the consolation of age and poverty.

"What is this, Menie?" cried the mother, as she saw her daughter trembling under the influence of nervous terror. "Has yer enemy been at her auld wark again? and have a' yer mother's injunctions failed to get ye to rest on the sure foundation o' conscious innocence? It canna be that George Wallace has listened to the poisoned breath o' scan-

dal and envy. Speak, child; and frae this book shall ye get the support that no son or daughter of Adam can lend to the children o' sorrow."

"Let me think, mother—let me collect mysel!" responded the girl, as she raised her hand to her head, and threw back her locks. "Whar am I? what spell is on me? Am I to be a bride on Fastern's E'en, or a disowned and heart-broken maiden? Why did he no speak to me—or why did I no speak to him? I will to him yet, and explain a', and the men will speak for me; but wha were they? Ah, they were strangers! and there's nane to warrant the words o' truth."

And rising, she made again towards the door, apparently with the confused intention of hurrying to Inverleith Mains; but her mother rose and restrained her, and she again sat down to collect her thoughts. It was some time before she could give so connected an account of the strange circumstances that had occurred within the space of a short hour, as to be understood by the mother; but, by questioning and cross-questioning, the latter came to the truth—and a truth of dangerous import she soon observed it to be. She had already, in her own person, suffered from the blighting effects of prejudice, and she trembled as she surveyed the difficulties that lay in the way of a proper explanation. The poison of a false conviction had too certainly already entered the breast of Wallace, and she knew that its workings might be made only the more inveterate, the greater the efforts resorted to for eradicating it. In all her trials, however, her refuge was the book that supported her fathers in the mountain glens, when the storm of persecution raged over a struggling land; and, enjoining her daughter to offer up with her their prayers to the throne of grace, she sought from the true fountain the means of relieving them from the danger which threatened innocence and poverty. The night passed, and the morning came, when it was resolved

that they both together should repair to the residence of Wallace, and openly declare to him the truth of the perplexed appearances which had too evidently operated on his mind to their disadvantage; but a little farther consideration showed them the inexpediency of thus assuming that the conduct of Menie required explanation; and the resolution that at last prevailed was, to wait for some time to ascertain what might be the intentions and motions of Wallace, whom they expected to call at the house, according to his wont, as he passed to the city. The day passed away, but there was no appearance of him; and, on the day following, it was ascertained, from one of his father's servants, who was passing with grain to the market, that he had gone to the borders of England to bury a relation, where, it was expected, he would remain for a considerable time, to arrange the affairs of the deceased, to whom his father was nearest heir-at-law. This intelligence made it only more certain that the prejudice had taken root; because, otherwise, both duty and inclination would have forced him to pay a visit to his betrothed before his departure, however sudden or unexpected that might have been.

A month passed, and Wallace had not yet returned; but Fastern's Even was still a month distant, and every day brought the hope of a letter, at least, to explain the cause of his conduct, and point out his future proceedings, whether "for feid or favour." But no letter came; and all their inquiries ended in the intelligence that his relative's affairs were not yet wound up, and that some weeks yet would elapse before he could return. The situation, meanwhile, of the victim of prejudice was painful, and gradually becoming hopeless. Her prior sufferings from the stings of calumny were alleviated by the expectation that the generous mind of Wallace would scorn the schemes of her enemy, and her marriage would refute the aspersions, and place her beyond the reach of their poison; but now her

relief was not only apparently cut off, but changed, by some adverse fate, into a proof—a confirmation of what had been alleged against her character. Every day found her a mourner; and it was only after nightfall that she could summon up resolution to go abroad on the small messages that domestic wants rendered necessary. Involved in mystery as were both mother and daughter, and pained as the latter was beyond endurance, there yet hung over them a still darker cloud of misfortune, equally mysteriously and fortuitously collected and formed, and equally cruel in its unmerited discharge on the heads of innocent victims. Misery of the deepest and most complicated kind seems often to be evolved from the most trifling causes, as if to show the proud sons of men, by a lesson that pains while it mocks them, the utter darkness of that blindness which they mistake for the light of a concealed reason. One evening, Menie had occasion to proceed to the small village of Canonmills, on a message to a friend; and, as usual, she waited till nightfall, to avoid the gaze of the neighbours, whom her fevered fancy exhibited to her (to a great extent untruly) as participators in the circulation of the calumnies under which she suffered. Wrapped up in a cloak, she hurried out, and proceeded down the narrow loan that then led to the village she intended to visit. Her step was stealthy, and her eye filled with secret shame, even among the shades of night. She reached the house, where she staid for a short time, and then set out on return, which she was inclined to accomplish as quickly and stealthily as she had done her progress forth; but she had not proceeded many paces from the village, when she observed a small wicker corban or basket lying by the side of a hedgerow that then ran along the lower part of the loan. There appeared to be no one near it; and, impelled by a natural curiosity, she proceeded forward and inspected it. There was in it, she observed, a bundle, so carefully pinned

up, that, though she applied her fingers hastily to it, she could not penetrate its folds. On lifting up the strange deposit, she found that it felt heavy. She stood irresolute, and again looked around her, but saw no one. She was flurried; and her desire to get home urged her to take it up, and proceed hurriedly along the road, with the view of taking it to the house with her, to examine it leisurely, and restore it to the owner, in the event of his casting up. She obeyed the natural impulse; and, as she ran home with the unknown charge, she repeatedly cast her eyes about, to see if any one appeared to claim it; but she still saw no one; and, in the space of a few minutes, she reached the door of the house, and hurried in. She placed the burden upon the floor—telling her mother, at the same time, that she had found it on the road, and brought it home to see what it contained, as the bundle was so carefully tied up that she could not unfold it on the highway. Her mother put on her spectacles; and, bending down, proceeded, with the aid of Menie, to undo the cloth, when, to their surprise, they evolved from the many foldings of an envelope the dead body (still warm) of a new-born babe. Menie fainted at the grim spectacle, and the mother ran for hartshorn, to recover her daughter. In a little time she revived, but it was only to shudder again at the strange sight; while the sagacious mind of Euphan was busy with the divinations of a sad experience, that pointed to some new calamity to result from this new turn of their adverse fate. She saw, at once, that if she called in her envious neighbours, that had been already busy with the character of her daughter, the unlikely story of the finding and bringing home of a dead child would be scorned and laughed at, while the circumstance of the child being found in the house would be laid hold of as a handle for corroborating and confirming the already circulated calumnies, if, indeed, it might not form a subject for judicial examination and exposure, that

might end in the ruin of one already too much persecuted. These cogitations led to a sudden resolution. Rolling up the body hastily in the envelope—

"Hie ye quickly, Menie," she said, "to the place whar ye fand this dangerous burden, and lay it in the precise position in which ye first saw it. The shafts o' envy are already thick round innocence, and we need not for sorrow to prick our own eyes that tears may fall. There is a knowledge that is for guid, and ane that is for evil; but 'the work of all flesh is before Him, and nothing can be hid from his eyes,' so shall this shame be made manifest in his own way. Haste, child, and obey the behest o' your mother."

The trembling girl started back at the mention of again bearing the unholy load; but she was impelled by the strange looks of her parent; and, like an automaton, she hurriedly snatched up the corb, and hastened with it to the place where she found it. She was wrapped up in her cloak, which she threw over the charge, and, after the manner of a thief, or a worker of secret iniquity, she slouched along the loan, trembling and stumbling at every step, till she came to the precise spot, and there she looked several times around her, before she ventured to deposit her burden. She thought she perceived some one behind her, who passed into an opening in the hedge, and she felt irresolute whether to lay down the corban at that moment, or ascertain first whether there was really any one behind the fence; but her mind again recurring to the contents of her burden, a feeling of horripilation crept over her, and, gently crouching down, as if terrified to behold her own act, she withdrew the cloak, left the charge, and fled precipitately along the dark side of the loan. Curiosity impelled her, as she fled, to turn her head, and she saw, with terror, some one issue from the opening in the hedge, and proceed, as she thought, to the identical spot which she

had just left. It struck her forcibly, and she shuddered at the thought, that the figure she saw resembled that of Wallace; and the suspicion arose, that he had been watching about the cottage, had followed her, and observed her motions, and would now examine the burden she had so stealthily and mysteriously deposited by the side of the hedge. A strong paroxysm of hysterical emotion seized her, as the full consequences of a realisation of the conjecture were arrayed before her by the conjuring power of her terrors. The prior unexplained suspicion under which she yet lay rose to swell the tumult of her thoughts. She thought her God had deserted her, and that the destiny of her miserable life was placed under the charge of evil spirits, who gloried in her utter ruin. She grew faint, and was scarcely able to walk; and before she again reached the house, the choking effects of the hysterical spasm had almost deprived her of breath. The door was open for her reception; and the moment she entered, she fell upon the floor, panting for air, the blood streaming from her nostrils, and shrill, broken screams, like the sounds that issue from the victims of Cynanche, bursting from her labouring throat.

The alarmed mother again applied restoratives to her suffering daughter, who, in a few minutes, opened her eyes, and became sensible.

"Were you seen, Menie?" whispered the mother, anxiously, in her ear. "Speak, love. 'Blessed is he that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.' Fear not, child; tell me, were ye seen by the eyes o' mortal?"

"God be merciful to me!" answered the girl. "If my eyes deceived me not, George Wallace cam behind me, and saw me lay down that evidence o' anither's shame. I am lost for ever!"

The mother was silent, and lifted up her eyes in an attitude of prayer to Heaven. The nervous symptoms still

clung to the daughter, and shiverings and spasms succeeded each other, till she grew so weak that she was unable to undress herself to retire to bed. The office was performed by the kindly hands of the parent, who, still overcome by the workings of fearful anticipations, sat down by the fire, and, fixing her eyes on the red embers, seemed for a time lost in the meditations of a heart that, filled with the spirit of God, felt that, as Esdras sayeth, "life is astonishment and fear," and that we cannot comprehend the things that are promised to the righteous in this world, nor those that are given to the wicked to destroy the happiness of the good.

The night was passed in anxiety and fearful forebodings; and the beam of the morning was dreaded by the daughter, as if it were the blaze of evidence that was to bring to light some crime she had committed. She was unable to rise; the small domestic duties of the morning were performed by the mother, pensively; and under the burden of the prospect of coming ill. About ten o'clock, a slight knock was heard at the door; Euphan cried, in a weak voice, "Come in." She heard a whispering and rustling of clothes, as if the visiters were deciding, by expostulations and pushings, which of them should enter first. At last two neighbours, who had been known to be active in circulation of reports against the daughter, made their appearance. On the usual salutation, expressed, as Euphan thought, in a strange voice, and accompanied by stranger looks—

"Is Menie ill the day?" said one of them, as she cast her eye obliquely upon the bed. "Has she nae doctor, puir thing?"

"I haena seen her for mony weeks," said the other. "Why do ye conceal her illness, Euphan, woman? The lassie may dee, when a helpin hand micht save her."

"Yet I hae heard that she was seen on the road to

Canonmills last nicht in the darkenin," rejoined the first, with an oblique glance at the other.

The words reached Menie in the bed, and the clothes shook above her.

"God be praised, my bairn is weel!" said Euphan, who understood the import of their speech; "but, though 'affliction cometh not forth from the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground,' yet are we all born unto grief. We hae our ain sorrows, and never pry into those o' our neighbours."

The conversation continued for some time, and the women departed, leaving the inmates to the certainty that the village had got hold of the dreaded topic of calumny against the miserable victim of prejudice. The shock had not expended its strength upon their already racked nerves, when the door was opened by a rude hand, and two men entered, dressed in the garb of officers of the Sheriff Court. An involuntary scream was uttered by Menie, as her eyes met the uniform of red facings of the harsh-looking men. Euphan was silent; but her eyes were filled with the eloquence of fear.

"Is your daughter at home, good woman?" said one of the men, while he cast his eye on the bed from which the weak scream issued.

"Ay," answered the mother. "What is your pleasure wi' her or wi' me?"

"Where is she?" added the same person.

"There," answered the mother. "She is weakly this morning, and hasna yet risen."

"No doubt—no doubt," said the man. "She cannot be weel. I understand she has been confined to the house for six weeks, with the exception of some night wanderings; but she must this day face the light of the sun. We have a warrant of apprehension against her, proceeding on a charge of child-murder. She must up and dress,

sick or well, and go with us. The body of the child lies in the sheriff's office; and it is right that the mother should be there also."

The words, which had an ironical virulence in them, unbecoming the station of the man, wrung a wail from the accused maiden, which, muffled by the bedclothes she had wrapped round her head, sounded like the waning voice of the departing spirit; and the mother, overcome by the accumulation of ills crowned by this consummation, flung herself at the feet of the speaker, and grasped his legs with her fleshless arm.

"God hath spoken once; but I have heard it many times that power belongeth unto him, and not to those wha whet their tongues like swords, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows at the innocent. My dochter is as guiltless o' this crime as the babe she is accused o' murderin. Let her remain, if ye hae in ye the heart that travaileth with pity, and I will awa to them that sent ye, and satisfy them, as never suspicion was satisfied, that Menie Dempster is nae mair capable o' committin this crime against God and his laws, than is she wha is sanctified by the holiest spirit that ever warmed the breast or filled with tears the een o' the mercifu. Grant me this ae request, and it will be a' that Euphan Dempster may ever ask o' man."

"We cannot," replied the officer; "all we can do is to retire for a moment, till your daughter dress herself; but we cannot wait long—so, quick—quick."

And the two men retired to the door, where their appearance had already collected a crowd of curious inquirers. The behests of necessity overcome the strongest feelings of mortals, and even impart to weakness a morbid strength. The unhappy maiden rose, and put on her clothes in the midst of the outpourings of her mother's religious inspirations; but her sobs and suppressed wailings bore evidence to a sorrow that would not be comforted, even by the as-

surances of the mercy that endureth for ever. The men again entered; and Menie, accompanied by her mother, was led away to the hall of the Sheriff's Court, to undergo an examination, which, of itself, might operate as their utter ruin in this world.

They arrived at the court-room about eleven o'clock. An examination of witnesses had already been begun. As they entered the door of the room where they were to be placed, Menie saw passing through the lobby several neighbours; and between two men, in the act of taking him to be examined, she observed George Wallace, whose eyes seemed red and inflamed, and who exhibited a strong reluctance to proceed forward, requiring the efforts of the men to drag him before the examinator. The whole scene seemed nothing but a dream; and the trifling circumstance from which it originated invested it with a character strange and unnatural. It was nearly four o'clock before Menie was called in to be examined. When led before the judge, she looked wildly around her. A chair was set for her, and she sat down. The usual questions as to her name, and other matters, were put, and the more important part of the examination proceeded. She was asked whether she had at one time been on terms of intimacy with Michael M'Intyre, the city guardsman; whether she had not been in his society among the trees of Inverleith, on a night mentioned; whether she had not been courted by George Wallace of Inverleith Mains; whether she had not been renounced by him; whether the reason of such renouncement was not her prior intimacy with M'Intyre; whether she had not been confined to the house for a considerable period, and what was the reason of such confinement; whether she had not deposited a basket containing the dead child near the hedgerow in the loan leading to Canonmills; and whether she was not the mother of the child. Every question was answered according to her sim-

ple ideas of innocence and truth; but when she came to state that she found the basket on the road, carried it home without looking at it, and then replaced it in the situation in which she found it, and all this without being able properly to account for so unlikely and extraordinary a proceeding, the sheriff, prejudiced as he was against her, from her previous admission that she had been seen in the society of M'Intyre, a man of dissolute habits—that Wallace had not visited her for many weeks, in consequence, as she supposed, of that circumstance—and that she had not been in the habit of going out for a considerable period—viewed her statement as false, and entertained the strongest suspicions of her being guilty of the crime laid to her charge. She was accordingly committed to prison until further evidence might be procured, to throw more light on the mysterious transaction.

In the meantime, the circumstances of the case being of that inexplicable kind that stirs the curiosity of a prying public, the results of the precognition got abroad, and it was ascertained that a considerable part of the information afforded to the sheriff had been procured from Elspeth Grierson, the mother of Margaret Grierson, and from one of the men who had seen Menie in the arms of the city guardsman. The manner in which Wallace became implicated as an unwilling witness against his betrothed, was also a curious feature in the case. He had not been absent in the south so long as it had been represented, but had concealed his arrival at home with a view to watch the motions of her whom he yet loved, in spite of the suspicions he entertained against her; and having, on that eventful evening, seen Menie hurrying along with a basket in her hand, he had followed her, and seen her deposit the charge in the manner already mentioned. At the very moment when he was in the act of examining it, Elspeth Grierson came up, as if she had been returning from Canonmills, and helped him to

undo the cloth in which the dead body of the child was wrapped; and thus was he painfully committed as a witness of what he had seen. The authorities soon after got intelligence of the circumstance; the child was taken to the office, and a great number of witnesses, chiefly pointed out by Elspeth Grierson (among the rest, George Wallace), were examined, previous to the interrogation of the supposed culprit herself.

The unhappy situation of the girl, and the apparently conflicting testimony of the witnesses, roused a sympathetic interest in many of her acquaintances, who, having set on foot a system of inquiry, induced or persuaded the fiscal to seek for the truth, rather than for an unilateral array of inculpative testimony. It was impossible, even on the part of the authorities, to deny the force of the facts, that Menie had been often seen by the neighbours during their visits, though she had kept the house in the day-time, in consequence of the shame produced by the reports circulated against her; that she had been on a visit to Canonmills on that evening when the child was exposed; that the rumours against her (with the exception of the facts attending the depositing of the corb) proceeded mainly from one source, which was a poisoned one; and that, in place of denying, as she might have done, all knowledge of the transaction, she had explained everything with a simplicity that was seldom exhibited by the votaries of vice. These things made a suitable impression, and the crown authorities were obliged to stop short in their proceedings, from the circumstance that they could find no proof of gravidity, and only one witness, Wallace himself—whose reluctance to give his testimony was looked upon, when contrasted with his ascertained inimical feelings towards her, as an affected exhibition of leniency to cover concealed hatred—could speak to the fact of the depositation of the child. All seemed enveloped in doubt; and, if there was a glimpse of certainty in regard

to any part of the inexplicable case, it was that, that doubt itself would effectuate the ruin of the unfortunate prisoner, who could never claim again the respect that is due to innocence.

For six months she was confined within the narrow cells of a jail, and during every day of that period she was visited by her mother, whose endeavours to support the young and breaking heart of the victim, by the application of the balm that God has sent to the miserable, only tended to calm the spirit as it sunk in the ruins of a decaying constitution. She was at last liberated; but the freedom of the body only made more manifest the effects of the blasting power of prejudice and suspicion; and the intelligence, that was communicated to her some time afterwards, that Wallace had married Margaret Grierson, crowned the misery that enslaved her, and seemed to cut off all hope that she could ever again hold up her head among the daughters of men. Time passed, and realised that inherent condition of his power, which, as his progress continues, brings to the miserable the sad consolation of the woes of their enemies. The marriage of Wallace with Margaret Grierson was an unhappy one. The collision of adverse sentiments produced in the wife an infirmity of temper, which, in its exasperated moods, sought for relief in intoxication; and the domestic feuds at Inverleith Mains became a common topic of conversation among the inhabitants of Broughton. Such are the turns of fate that acknowledge the influence of a power whose ways we cannot comprehend; yet a still more extraordinary discovery was to be manifested to the child of misfortune. One night Menie and her mother were engaged in their evening exercise, heedless of the concerns of a world from which they were excluded, when the door opened with a loud noise, and George Wallace stood before them. His eyes were wild and bloodshot, a fever was in his blood, and his nerves, excited by some maniac passion, shook

till his frame seemed convulsed, and the powers of judgment and will lay prostrate before the fiend that ruled his heart. Menie started up affrighted, and the mother laid her hand upon the book.

"I am compelled to be here," he cried, with a choking, unnatural voice, as he held forth his hands to the maiden; "and it is well I have come, for the quiet air o' this house o' innocence already quells the fever o' my heart. I have this moment left my wife; and I had a struggle to pass the water-dam, that shone in the mune to invite me to bury mysel and my grief in its still breast. But there is a God in heaven; and He it is wha has brought me here, to look ance mair on her I loved and ruined, and now can only save by my ain endless misery and shame. She lies yonder steeped in drink; but the power o' conscience has repelled the subtle poison, and she could speak in burnin words her crime and my eternal shame. Margaret Grierson it was—my wife—the mother o' my child—O God, help my words!—she has confessed, in her drunken madness, and my heart tells me it is the confession o' God's eternal truth, that the babe was hers—that her mother laid it by the hedgerow, a breathin victim, to hide her daughter's dishonour—and that it died there by suffocation. Let me speak it out, that this throbbin heart may be stilled. But it cannot—it never can be in this world—no—no—nor in the next."

And, groaning deeply, he threw himself on a chair, and rugged his hair like a maniac in the highest paroxysm of his disease. The unexpected and extraordinary statement rendered the women speechless. They looked at him, and at each other. Mutterings of prayer escaped from the lips of Euphan, and surprise and pity divided the empire of the heart of the daughter, who had never thought to see misery that equalled her own. There was no reason for the feeling of triumph, where the melancholy relief came from the ruins of one whom they had both loved and respected. He had

been the only individual that ever influenced the heart of the one, and the other had fondly looked forward to him as the support and solace of her old age. Now he was a ruined, miserable man, and had no power to make amends for the wrong he had unintentionally committed. The calmness of the silence, and the relief that came from the unburdening of a secret that had been wrung from him by the pangs of conscience, brought him to a sense of the position in which he had placed himself. He had put himself and his wife in the power of those he had wronged, and returning reason brought with it the fears of self-preservation.

"What hae I done?" he again exclaimed, as he took his hand from his forehead, and looked into the face of Menie. "I hae condemned mysel and the wife o' my bosom—my conscience and a burnin revenge hae wrought this out o' me; but what shall be the consequence thereof? Will ye bring her to justice, the gallows—and me to a still deeper ruin and desolation than that which hang over this house o' innocent suffering? Say, Menie; speak, guid mother; our doom is in your hands. What says that blessed book on the merits o' forgiveness and the crime o' revenge?"

Euphan Dempster fixed her eyes on him calmly.

"Sair, sair hae ye wranged me, and that puir child o' misfortune, wha stands there unable to reply to ye, though the tears o' her grief and her pity speak in strange language the waes o' a broken heart. But sairer, far sairer, hae ye wranged yersel; for, though we 'have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons and daughters o' men,' we have been answered in the dark nights in which we cried and wept, by Him who 'maintains the cause o' the afflicted, and the right o' the poor;' but ye are left to the wrath o' yer ain spirit, that burns in yer heart, and even now lights up your eyes wi' a strange licht. Vainly would my daughter and I hae read this book, if we hadna learned to forgive our enemies. You hae naething to fear from us."

"And are thae the sentiments o' her wha was ance the life and light o' this stricken heart!" said Wallace, as he turned mournfully to Menie, who, pale and emaciated from her sorrow, stood before him, the ghost of what she was. "O God! can this be my Menie? Is a' that ruin o' health and beauty the doin o' him wha loved her as nae man ever loved woman? Are thae your sentiments, Menie? and am I, and is my miserable wife, safe in the keepin o' your forgiveness?"

"Ay, George," answered the maiden, as she burst into tears at the recollection of her former love, and the sight of her unhappy lover. "I hae been sair dealt wi'; but I forgie ye; and I forgie also your wife. I will dree the scorn o' an ill warld; but till you and she are dead, my lips will never mention the wrangs I hae suffered from my auld freend, and him I could hae dee'd to serve."

"Miserable man that I am!" exclaimed the youth. "How much do your generosity and kindness show me I have lost, and lost for ever? Whither now shall I fly!—to the arms o' a murderer, the wife o' my bosom—or to the wide world, to roam, a houseless man, to whom there is nae city o' refuge on earth?"

Unable longer to bear the poignancy of his feelings, he rushed out of the house.

For several years after the scene we have now described, Wallace was not heard of. None but his father knew whither he had gone. His wife was absolutely discarded from the farmhouse; and, her habits getting gradually worse, she became a street vagrant, and renounced herself to the dominion of the evil power that had, from an early period, ruled her, but whose workings she had so artfully, for a time, attempted to conceal. She paid many visits to Inverleith Mains, but was rejected by the old farmer, who attributed to her the ruin of his son. On these occasions, she broke forth in wild execrations; and, on her return, did

not fail to assail the widow and her daughter as the instruments of her ruin. The old story of the child was published at the door in the words of drunken delirium; and often mixed with stray sentences of triumph that, to any one possessed of the secret, would have appeared a sufficient condemnation of herself. Yet the construction was all the other way; for Menie had never been cleared by evidence, and the virulent expressions of the vagabond were, according to the laws which too often regulate mundane belief, taken as inculpation; and hence the prejudice against the innocent victim was kept up, and the lives of her and her mother embittered to a degree that called for all the aids of their "sacred remeid" to ameliorate sufferings that seemed destined to have no end upon earth. But the ways of Heaven are wonderful. A boisterous sea may wreck, but the sufferer may be carried to the shore by a wave which, if less impetuous, might have been his grave. Wallace's wife at last died from the effects of that dissipation that had opened the evil heart to give forth the confession of her own shame; and, after this relief, the husband's father paid regular visits to Menie and her mother. He never spoke of the secret that had driven his son away, nor of the place to which he had fled; but he showed sufficiently by his attentions and kindness, that he knew all. The house of the widow and her daughter was now kept full by supplies from the farm; money, too, was given to them in abundance, and, in so far as regarded worldly means, the two inmates had, at no period of their lives, been so well provided for.

Five years had now elapsed since the disappearance of Wallace. One night, as Menie and her mother were sitting by the fire, the door was opened, and Wallace stood before them. His manner was now very different from what it was on that day when he rushed like a madman from the house. He stood for a moment, looking at the couple who

had suffered so much from his wrongs; and the first words he uttered were—

"Menie Dempster, ye have been true to your promise, and ye have been rewarded. That woman is gone to her trial, and yours is ended. Now shall truth triumph."

Menie was unable to utter a word. Her eyes were alternately turned to Wallace and to the fire. The mother laid her hand solemnly on the Bible, and addressing the inspired volume—

"Thus are yer secrets brought to light—ay, even out o' darkness. They wha trust in ye shall not fail in the end, though they should stumble seven times, yea, seven times seven."

"If I had trusted mair to that," said Wallace, "than to the whisperins o' my ain heart, I might never have been a miserable husband, or a banished man. But it's no yet owre late. I am resolved. Menie, will ye now consent to be the wife o' him wha wrought, maybe unwittingly, to your ruin?"

Menie was yet silent.

"I will publish your innocence," rejoined he. "There is mair evidence than my word against her wha is dead. It shall be known far and wide, and you will be the innocent and respected wife o' George Wallace."

"I will speak for her," said the mother; "she will consent. It is asked of her by Him wha has brought good out o' evil, and whase mercies, bein the reward o' the patience o' trial, are as a command that shall not be disobeyed."

Wallace drew near to Menie, and took her hand. Her face was still turned away, but he felt the trembling pressure, that got sooner to the heart than the sounds of the voice.

"It is enough, Menie," he whispered. "Come, the mune is again shinin amang the trees o' Warriston."

The couple proceeded to their old haunts. They passed

the hedgerow where the child had been deposited. Menie's step was quick as they approached it, her eyes were averted from the spot, and they passed it in silence. We need not record the spoken sentiments of lovers in the situation of this couple. They parted, after it was arranged that their marriage should take place in the following week.

In the interval, the most prudent and effectual means were taken to clear up the mystery of the old story. The written statements of several individuals, who had heard the broken confessions of the woman, were taken. Wallace and his father added theirs, and there was soon a reaction in favour of Menie, much stronger than the original imputation. Every one believed her innocent; and the marriage, which took place a short time after, confirmed all.

THE PROFESSOR'S TALES.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF IDIOTS.

THE very foundation of idiocy is peculiarity; whatever this unfortunate class may want, they do not want those features by which they are distinguishable from the ordinary ranks of mankind. Hence the interest which idiocy has ever exerted, and the splendid creations which, under the name of asylums, quiet, country residences, &c., have been made for their accommodation. The great mass of society—with the exception, perhaps, of a kingdom, which shall, for the present, be nameless—have nothing *idiotical*, that is, peculiar, belonging to them exclusively. They move as others move, dress as others dress, think as others think, and worship God as others do and as others did. Were it not for *idiots*, in the extended sense of the word, there were an end of plays, novels, and all works of fiction. Very few women. if we may credit Pope, are idiots: for he says—

> "Nothing so true as what you once let fall—
> Most women have no character at all;
> Matter too soft a standing mark to bear,
> And best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair."

But, although the original meaning and enlarged sense of the term might carry us into a field thus almost boundless, we shall at the present limit ourselves to two classes of idiots, comprehending, as they do, a great variety of species. First, the natural idiot, or the simply fatuous: of these there are *two* varieties—the peaceable and the frantic. Secondly, the unnatural or rational idiot; of these the varieties are infinite, and a selection only is in the present instance either desirable or attainable.

We return then to the purely fatuous, or peaceable idiot.

Poor innocent! as he is uniformly and kindly named by the neighbourhood. There he walks about, along that stream, or across that meadow, from morn to night, and from night to morning, his hand at his cheek, and his lips muttering incoherence, such as, "Johnnie, quo' he, lad; ah, ha, Willie lad, Willie lad, Willie lad." He is so biddable, that a child may make him lie down, or rise up, enlarge or shorten his step. He will carry a peat-barrow when peats are a-casting, tod hay, or lift a child safely over a fence; yet, for all that, he is not always to be trusted—for there are times when his countenance gets flushed, his frame nervously convulsed, and then he utters dreadful things, and becomes violent and unmanageable. These are, however, only aberrations, not continued character; and, by watching the symptoms of the approaching storm, the effects may be easily avoided. Idiots, even of this peaceable and innocuous kind, are now abstracted from their natural and kindly hearths, and concealed in asylums and private residences. Not so—it was not indeed so—in the olden times. The hereditary possession of at least one "innocent" in a family was deemed a blessing. "There never will be wanting," said the pious parent, "a bit for thy helplessness, poor Johnnie." Good luck took up her residence under the roof where such a one resided; and the parent was doubly attached to *the object*, as he was sometimes called. To hurt him, or injure him in any manner of way, was domestic treason; and even the schoolboy, on his harvest rambles, only pelted him with nuts and brambleberries. Poor Johnnie! he was missed one day; he had wandered beyond his ordinary reach, and all the town was in motion searching for him. The night came on, dark, and even drifty; and the poor helpless object could nowhere be found. Shouts were raised, dogs were dismissed on errands of inquiry, herd-boys ran, and servant lads greatly hastened

their pace. At last, he was discovered on the brink of a precipice, over which he was suspended by the coat-tails, which a strong shepherd's dog was holding fast in its teeth. But for the powerful sagacity of this brute, the helpless being had been dashed to pieces. When he was rescued from his dangerous position, he was repeating, in his usual manner, "Johnnie's a-caul quo' he, lad." He was never suffered to be in such danger again. These eyes saw him on his death-bed; and, at the instant of his departure, it was indeed a most affecting scene.

> "The soul's dark cottage, shatter'd and decay'd,
> Let *in* new light through chinks which time had made."

As the pulse ebbed and the feet swelled, reason seemed to resume her long-deserted seat. He actually raised himself upon his elbow, drew the back of his hand twice across his brow, as if clearing away some obstruction from his eyes, and, looking around with an eye unusually bright and beaming, lambent like an expiring taper—

"Oh, what a dream! what a dream! But I see you all now; yes—yes—I see my kind mother, my dear father, my sister! Yes—yes—I am now well. I am awake—I live." Hereupon the fatal and well-known struggle in the throat stopped his speech; he fell back, gave one deep sigh, and was at rest. Poor Johnnie! if a tear of gratitude can gratify anything that lives, bearing the most distant relationship to thee, that tear has now been shed. Heaven has long been merciful to the poor Innocent.

But the frantic idiot who now struggles against the chain and the strait-waistcoat in yonder cell. He too, at one time, roamed at large, to the great alarm, but seldom to the injury, of the lieges. "His bark," as the people said, "was waur than his bite;" and, if at any time he required to be confined by force, a few kindly words and soothing accents threw oil on the troubled sea, and restored comparative serenity. Daft Will Gibson rises before me; his long rung

or kent by way of staff, his Kilmarnock night-cap, and shoes of many patches, his aversion to all manner of trick or nickname, and his furious onset when pursued by school-boys: all these circumstances rise again from the dark past, and glare before me like the shades in "Macbeth." Yet, though occasionally furious, and even dangerous, he was kind-hearted, and not unobservant of character. The timid he rejoiced to terrify, whilst he passed by the bold and firm unmolested. Though he often threw large stones at those who assailed him, he took special care always to throw short of his object. But one day a little child, unobserved by him, had crossed the pathway of his missile after it had been delivered, altogether unobserved by poor Will. The child was knocked down and greatly injured—it bled profusely. Will seemed horrorstruck, and roared aloud—

"It was I! It was me! It was daft Will Gibson!"

From that day he never lifted another stone, but always exhibited the greatest liking for this child—of which the following anecdote is sufficient proof. A little boy was playing in the channel of a mountain torrent, then almost dry. There was thunder in the distance, and Queensberry had put on her inky robe of darkness. All at once, the burns began to emit a loud, roaring, rattling sound, and down came the Caple Water—as my informant, who witnessed the scene, said—like "corn sacks." The boy, owing to his eagerness in pursuing a trout (which he was endeavouring to catch) from stone to stone, did not hear or see the approaching danger, till the mighty flood was upon him. My informant—a shepherd—threw aside plaid and staff, and ran to the rescue; but the red and roaring flood was before him; and a fine boy of seven or eight years old would undoubtedly have lost his life, had it not been for the poor maniac, who chanced to be pulling rushes hard by. He rushed into the flood just as it was oversetting the helpless victim, and, with a tremendous jerk, threw him clean

upon the green bank of the torrent. He then endeavoured himself to clear the bank; but the treacherous and hollow earth, under the pressure of the water, gave way, and down tumbled brow and man into the raging whirlpool—the man underneath, the brow above him. The boy, by means of his heels, escaped; but poor Will Gibson's body was next day found some miles lower down, sadly disfigured and mangled. Thus did this grateful maniac expiate the inadvertent injury which he had done this very boy when a mere child, by saving his life at the expense of his own.

We now pass, in prosecution of our history, from darkness into light, from the irresponsible and irrational agent, to the responsible and foolish. Our guide here, in this *mare magnum* of idiocy, shall be *the use* of language in discussing the various merits of the different classes. We shall make use of no new phraseology, but be guided to our purpose by the acknowledged and recognised use and meaning of terms. Why the word "idiot" is retained in conversational language in particular, when its original and more legitimate meaning is lost, we have already pointed at; it is owing to analogy and resemblance that in this case, as in many others, such terms are legitimate and expressive.

There is, then, in the first place, to come at once to the point—there is

"THE HAVERING IDIOT."

Horace gives a most correct idea of this class in these well-known lines:—

> "Hunc neque dira venena, nec hosticus auferet ensis
> Nec laterum dolor, aut tussis aut tarda podagra,
> *Garrulus hunc quando consumet.*"

Galt, too, has hit off the character, under a feminine aspect, in his "Wearifu Woman;" but we have no occasion to ask Horace for his spectacles, or Galt for his microscope,

in order to discover the features of this most numerous and annoying class. Midges, in a new-mown meadow, are terribly teasing; so are peas in one's shoes—particularly if unboiled. There is a certain cutaneous disease which is said to give exercise at once to the nails and to patience. Who would not fret if placed naked, all face over, in a whin bush? To be teased and tormented with grammar rules is vastly provoking; and to get the proof questions by heart cannot be deemed anything but annoying. A showery day, when you have set out on a long-meditated "pic-nic," will vex the most patient soul into spleen; and marriage-settlements are frequently great sources of heartburnings and delays. To be told that your house is on fire, when your messenger is on his way to effect an insurance, may possibly give pain; and to find that every pipe is frozen, so that there is not a drop of water for the engine, may probably add to your chagrin. All these, and a thousand other miseries to which human flesh is heir, may, nay must, be borne; but the torment of coming into ear-shot of a "havering idiot" is a thousand and a thousand times more insupportable. You are placed beside him at table, and in a mixed company of men of literature and science, whom probably you may never see again. A subject is started, which, from peculiar reasons, happens to be not only of itself curious, but exceedingly interesting to you, professionally in particular. Professor Pillans is discussing education, or Combe is manipulating heads; Sir David Brewster is describing the polarisation of light, or Tom Campbell is thrilling every heart with poetic quotations;—no matter, you are unfortunately in juxtaposition to a "havering idiot," and about five removes from the focus of general conversation. He will not let you rest for a moment, but is ever whispering into your ear some grand thing which he said last evening at Lady Whirligig's ball. You push your dish forward, and fix your eyes upon the intelligent speaker. He ob-

serves, and mistakes, or seems to mistake, your movement and your motive, and immediately hopes he may help you to the dish you are after. You are fairly *dished;* and unless you knock him down with your fist in the first place, and shoot him afterwards, you have no resource but to repeat the lines of Horace, already quoted, and submit to your fate.

His stories are infinite and inextricable; but, unlike the epic, they have neither a beginning, a middle, nor an end. When he starts with "I'll tell you a good thing," you listen for an instant, but immediately perceive that you are on the wrong scent; and, as he advances, he is ever admonishing you with his elbow of the many *hits* he is making; and having heard him out—if that be possible!—you immediately exclaim, "Well!" thinking assuredly the cream of the joke is yet awaiting you.

"But, sir, you are making no meal at all. You must try some of that fine honeycomb; it is most excellent; it is of our own making; for, I may say, we have almost everything within ourselves. The bees, last season, did not do well at all; but they have done better this, sir. You are a natural philosopher, sir—can you tell me how the bees see their way back again to their houses, when they go far away in search of flowers and honey?"

"Just the way, I suppose, ma'am, that they see their way a-field."

"Oh, ay—I ken that; but I hae a book here—(go away, Jeanie, and bring me the book on natural history; the Cyclopædia, ye ken). Now, sir, this book tells me that, from the shape of their eye, the bees canna see an inch before them—how then do they travel miles and miles, and never lose their road?—but bless me, sir, you're no making a meal at no rate. Ay, here's 'the article,' as it is called. Read that, sir, just at the bottom of the 196th page," &c. &c.

"THE BLETHERING IDIOT"

Is manifestly twin-brother to the haverer, with this small difference, however, that the bletherer is a mere repeater or reporter of havers. The one is the importer, as it were, of the article wholesale, and the other retails the article thus imported. They are raw commodity and manufactured goods—they are original and copy—cause and effect. Burns was quite aware of this when he wrote—

> "And baith a yellow George to claim,
> And thole their blethers."

These blethers were not original inventions, but merely varnished repetitions. The blethering idiot is most dangerous as well as most disagreeable. In this respect, he even surpasses the haverer, whose annoyances terminate in themselves, in the irritations and inconveniences of the moment. But the bletherer is a dangerous friend, an inveterate foe, and a most unsafe neighbour. Will Webster was the intimate friend of poor James Johnston. James was a lad of honest intentions, fair talents, and warm feelings. He was educated as an engineer, and had already acquired a certain status and character in that capacity. His friend Webster had been accidentally a school companion, from the proximity of their dwellings and the intimacy of their parents. Webster had studied law, and was about to pass advocate, when he came to meet his friend, and spend a harvest vacation with him at Castledykes, in the parish of Tynron, Dumfries-shire. The two young men were in the bloom and strength of youth, being both some months under twenty-one. Georgina Gordon was the daughter of a small neighbouring proprietor (a Dunscore laird), an only daughter, her father's prop (her mother having died at her birth), and the admiration of everybody who merely saw her at church on Sunday, or who knew her intimately. I should have mentioned before, that this beautiful flower had been named Georgina, with the view of perpetuating

the name of a brother whose fate had been involved in obscurity. He had betaken himself early to sea, and the vessel in which he sailed had never more, during several years before Georgina's birth, been heard of. All possible inquiries had been made, but without effect. The Thunderer, Captain Morris, had been seen off the coast of South America; but no more was known. James Johnston was already in the way of making reasonable proposals to any one; but his heart had long been fixed at Castledykes. He used to wander for hours and days along the glen of the cairn, and within sight of the old family abode. Georgina, however, had already many lovers, and was reported to have, in fact, made a selection. It was again and again reported by Will Webster to his friend Johnston, and to everybody who took any interest in the report, that he had seen Georgina enter the Kelpie Cave in company with a lover, and that he had even seen them fondly embracing each other. At first Johnston gave no heed to Will's *blethers;* but still they gradually made an impression upon him. He became, at last, decidedly jealous, when, led and guided by his friend Will, he beheld with his own eyes a male figure, closely wrapped up in a plaid, holding secret converse with the lovely Miss Gordon. What will not jealousy, goaded on by officious and injudicious friendship, do? Unknown to any one, he met and accosted the figure in the dark: a struggle and a contest with lethal weapons took place, and the stranger fell. No sooner had the deed been done, than James saw and repented of his rashness. The wound which he had inflicted was bound up, and the fainting man, help being procured, conveyed to Castledykes. James Johnston was not the man to fly, even should death prove the consequence of his rashness. A curious denouement now took place: the person whom James had wounded was no other than the long-lost George Gordon. The vessel in which he had sailed had not been wrecked, as was supposed,

but had been taken, scuttled, and sunk, by Spanish privateers, who then infested the Leeward Islands. He had been bound and fettered in the hold, till he came under a solemn promise neither to desert nor abandon his colours in the hour of battle. Under such discipline, it was no wonder that, in a few years, George Gordon (now taking the Spanish name of Joan Paraiso) should be habituated to all manner of rapine and bloodshed. From less to more, by acts of heroism, he became second, and ultimately first, in command of a Spanish privateer.

England, having viewed this growing evil with a suitable indignation, sent out her armaments to the west; and the Don Savallo, Joan Paraiso, commander, was taken. The prisoners were conveyed to Britain; and it being discovered that Paraiso was originally a British subject, he was thrown into prison to abide his trial. From this he escaped, almost by a miracle, and wandering over the kingdom in another domino, or assumed name, he came at last, as if by the law of force and attraction, to his native glen. But he durst not yet discover himself, for he was an outlaw, and the papers were filled with rewards for his apprehension. In this situation he discovered himself, under the most dreadful oaths of secresy, even from his own father (at least for a time), to his sister. The rest, up to the period of his wound, which was by no means dangerous, is easily understood. What follows will be necessary to complete the narrative:—James Johnston having learned all this from Georgina, who, in a moment of excitement, discovered that it was not a lover but a brother over whom she hung, he again met his blethering friend Webster—acquainted him with the history, and, in a few days, Joan Paraiso was arrested in his bed, and carried to Plymouth, to undergo his trial. The grief and horror of all may be easily conceived. All, save the origin of the evil, were thunderstruck and overpowered with grief and vexation. "But for your long tongue and

empty head," said Johnston, taking him one day by the throat, "my dear Georgina had been mine—her brother had lived, and all had been well." The guilty man struggled, and was dashed against a stone wall with tremendous violence. A concussion of the brain followed, and poor unhappy James Johnston was himself on trial for murder. It is true that he was acquitted, as the surgeon would not positively affirm that the dead person had not died from a natural stroke of apoplexy; and it is likewise true, that Joan Paraiso, *alias* George Gordon, was acquitted, as he had been compelled, from fear of death, to act as he had done. But Georgina was no longer an heiress, and the mercenary laird of Clatchet-Knowe, who had all but obtained her consent to a marriage, became suddenly cooled in his fervour. Johnston hearing of this, and having, after some months, recovered his spirits, made his addresses, and was accepted. Georgina Johnston is now, or was lately, a happy wife and mother. Her husband has purchased the farm of Kirkcudbright, in that neighbourhood, and they live in comfort and respectability. So much as a specimen of the achievements and fate of a bletherer. But who waits there?

"THE AFFECTED IDIOT."

Let him enter. What a thing! But it is not with the tailor-work that we have to deal; we leave that to the titter and ridicule of every sensible person in the company, and to the compassion of the rest.

> "In man or woman, but far most in man,
> I hate all affectation."

So says good-hearted Cowper. But, hating affectation, he must in some degree hate a large section of the male, and a still larger proportion of the female sex. In fact, we are all more or less affected—I in writing this article in such an easy, off-hand, after-dinner manner, and the publisher of the "Border Tales" in affecting not to be affected by so many

favourable notices in so many papers. I don't like the word —I hate it ever since Lord Brougham (who once was so great) made use of the one half of it, when speaking of Sugden; but, notwithstanding, I must out with it—"*humbug*" is the go, and everybody knows it, and yet everybody does it. Was there ever such a queer world, ma'am? I *wish* —well, I will tell you, madam, what I wish—I wish I had a new tack of "this world," with all its nonsense. This thing we call "life" is to me exceeding amusing; but I am off, on the very velocipede of affectation, and must "'bout ship."

The affectation of no affectation is the most unsupportable of all. Simple Johnnie comes into the room, throwing about, from side to side, both his elbows. He immediately, in the simplicity of his nature, lets you know that he never was up to the ordinary methods of society; in testimony of which he sits down beside you on a sofa—plaits his legs, and passes his hand along his leg, from heel to knee, and *vice versa*. You talk of anything and everything. He is sure you are right. He never could remember anything. He is sure you are right; but he cannot say, it is so long since he read about it. He tells you at once that people call him "Simple Johnnie;" that he once tumbled into a river, whilst reading a book; that he is *so* absent, you have no notion; that he has forgotten his own name, and only remembered it, after having given a penny to a boy, saying, "Now, my boy, do you know who gave you that?" He puts on a blue stocking and a grey, and wonders that people observe it; he pushes through the market, snuffing, snorting, and repeating almost aloud, Thomson's "Seasons;" he is called a good sort of a body, and tells you so; but he knows in reality that he is an excellent classical scholar, and a writer of no mean degree. Affectation, however, hangs over him, like a mist; and his real merits, which are great, are greatly obscured by the medium through which they are seen.

Let us change the sex!—A farmer's daughter married to

an earl—no, not an earl—a laird—a country gentleman. She is all *gentility*—talks of nothing beneath dukes and marquises; asks you if there is anybody of note in India; never saw fish eaten without a silver fork; and considers that Queen Victoria has never seen good company! After a', wha cares? This is a precious rag of feminality; nobody can hurt her feelings, or destroy her equanimity. You mention, in her company, that Lady Louisa Russell, her most intimate friend, of whom she talks daily, and to everybody, has left the town without calling; she assumes an air of supreme indifference, and exclaims—"Well! after a', wha cares?"

A bluestocking!—No, I will not spend ink and paper on the subject—it is literally *thread*-bare—not a loop in the stocking but may be seen by a man of ninety without spectacles. A fop!—faugh!—who cares for anything of the dandy or exquisite species?—A braggadocio—another Munchausen! who kills trouts by the gross, and men by the dozen—who shoots on the wing—*e. g.* Two individuals of this description once met in my own presence. They had been in India, and were Indianising for the benefit and entertainment of the company. Shooting came on the carpet, and their various achievements were stated. Colonel A—— had shot more than a dozen water-fowl at one shot.

"I am sure," said he, appealing to his Indian friend—"I am sure, general, you know it to be true."

"Twelve dozen, by God!" was the emphatic response.

"Who has not heard of my father, the colonel?"—viz., Colonel Cloud—and yet this colonel proved to be nothing more than plain Mr B——, from the grand town of Forfar. Oh, how shall I overtake the varied forms that rise up before me!—as well might I essay to catch and fix every butterfly from the Emperor of Morocco down to the blue wing. "Upwards and downwards, thwarting and convolved," the myriads of insects dance away their hour, and are forgot.

And who art thou who thus speakest of others? A solitary fly! A large blue-bottom, madam, as insignificant and ephemeral as any amongst them. But of this enough. Let us now introduce another actor, or rather speaker.

"Well, sir, I am glad I have met you; for I was just going to call upon you, to tell you that my son John, poor fellow—you know John?—that he has got a step—what they call a step in the service, and that he has had a severe fever, but is now quite well; and that he writes to his sister—such a letter—but I have it here, sir, in my pocket. Pray do, sir, sit down for a little, and I will read it to you; it is such a funny letter—you have no notion—and so full of inquiries for everybody, amongst the rest for yourself, whom it is wonderful that he remembers—he has such a memory, my Johnnie, and always had. I remember, when just a little thing not higher than this parasol. But, bless me, sir, you are not listening!"

"No, ma'am; I beg your pardon; but I have an engagement." (Exit.)

And who does not see, at once, that this is a

"PROSING IDIOT?"

"I was up, yes—yes—up—up—yes, I was up by five yesterday—yes—yes—yesterday morning. When do you rise, ma'am? I always rise—yes—yes—rise—I always rise by six—true—true—quite true—by six, ma'am—it is good—so good—yes—yes—very good, ma'am, for the health—the health—yes—the health."

Such is the drivel which we have often heard oozing, drop by drop, from a male creature of the prosy kind.

"THE BLAZING IDIOT."

The blazing idiot is all over self and wonderment. He has done—what has he not done? He can do—what can he not do? One of this character was one day entertaining

old Quin with the account of an encounter with a furious bull, in which the blazer had proved too much for the horner, and held him, in spite of his neck, till he roared for a truce.

"Oh," said Quin, looking around him knowingly on the company, "that is nothing at all to what I once experienced myself."

The original blazer looked amazement.

"Yes," says Quin, "I—even I, have managed the bull exercise in a higher style than you, sir. You only held the bull's head down by the horns, but I twisted his head from his neck, and threw it after his departing hind-quarters!"

This produced a roar at the idiot's expense, and he shrunk out, to announce his achievements somewhere else.

Is he a traveller?—Why, then, Munchausen is a fool to him. He has undergone, achieved, seen, heard, tasted, more wonders than a thousand Gullivers.

"The bats of Madagascar are large, assuredly, and almost exclude the sunlight by the breadth of their hairy wings. But the bats are nothing, sir, to the bees."

"What kind of bees have they?"

"Why, sir, the bees are, 'pon honour, sir, they are as large as your sheep in this country."

"Why, then, one would require to keep a pretty sharp look-out ahead, in case of a near encounter with such a winged monster."

"Not at all, sir. They make such a roaring noise, sir, with their wings, that you can hear them, like the bulls of Bashan, a full mile distant."

"Terrible! But are they numerous?"

"Oh, exceedingly!"

"And what kind of flowers have they to feed on?"

"Why, just ordinary flowers. They cover them all over, and insert their proboscis into a thousand, without stirring from their position."

"Yes! And what kind of skeps have they?'
"Oh, just ordinary skeps, like ours in this country."
"Yes! And how do these bees get into the skeps?"
"Oh, *just let them see to that!*"

But these may be termed the magnificent blazers. There is an animal of this species of very reduced dimensions; and yet, from its numbers and activity, it is not less provoking and annoying than the giant race. You cannot mention a long walk which you have taken, but it out-walks you by at least ten miles. You cannot drink your three bottles at a sitting, but it empties five. You made, whilst a boy, some hairbreadth escapes, but they are nothing to what it has escaped. You have had a very bad fever, and lay a whole week insensible; this creature roared a whole month. You have broken your tendon Achilles; this unfortunate has cut all the arteries and tendons of the leg. Go where you will, the land has been travelled before you. Do what you may, the thing has been done, and much better done, already. In fact, you are only the copy of the original before you; a shaping out of a web; a degenerate branch of a vine in full growth; an Italian alphabet in the presence of a Roman. "I thought my master a wise man; but this man makes my master a fool," says the housemaid in Dean Swift; and it is thus that the emmet Blazer befools you, turn where you may. Whom have we next in this our show-box of rarities? Step in, sir. Don't stumble on the doorway, like Protesilaus in setting out for Troy. Oh, I ask your pardon—

"THE BLUNDERING IDIOT."

Sit down there, sir—no, not on that sofa—with your dirty garments, and shoes bemired; but on that arm-chair, where you may roll about to your heart's content. Now, sir, be silent; for I see you are about to blunder out whatever comes uppermost (and that is generally froth and

scum), and listen to me. I am going to read you a lecture. It was owing to your blundering interference that I am not the Laird of Peatie's Mill at this moment. You went to my uncle, and, by the way of recommending his nephew, told him that I was an intimate acquaintance of yours, and that you and I had many a happy night together at Johnnie Dowie's. Now, you ought to have known my uncle's views and habits—in short, his character—and that he had all his life long an utter abhorrence of anything approaching to dissipation. My uncle instituted inquiry, and found that what you stated was true, at least to a certain extent; and, in consequence, cut me off with a shilling, leaving Peatie's Mill to a miserly, mean fellow, who had once informed him of the approaching failure of one who owed him money. You need not make any apology now, the thing is done, and cannot be undone. When I was on the point of being marrried to an heiress, with a good person and a fine property, you came again as my evil genius, denying a report, which I had myself propagated, of my early indiscretions, and assuring her cousin that I was totally incapable of anything of the kind; that I was a perfect Nathaniel, or Joseph, or what not; and, in short, so disgusted the lady with your praises of me, that she immediately cut me, and married the master of a coasting vessel. I know what you are going to say; but I know, too, that you had no business to pop your nose into other people's business. Besides, at last election, did not you assure the members to whom you, amongst others, applied in my favour, that I was at heart a Tory, though I had assumed Whig colours of late; and all this because you knew his own father had been a violent Tory in old times. This so disgusted my patron, that I lost the stamps by it. Your blundering idiocy, sir—without any bad motive to arm it to mischief—has done more injury to yourself, as well as to others, than would be the very worst intentions and the most malevolent endeavours.

But I spare you—convinced, as I am, that nothing which I can say will ever drain the blundering propensity out of your nature. But whom have we here?—

"A BORN IDIOT."

"Well, ma'am, let me have your own story from your own lips."

"Why, sir, do you use no more ceremony with me, knowing who I am, sir? When your ancestors, sir, were working on the queen's highways, and breaking stones ——"

"I beg your pardon, madam; but it is but a short time since Macadamising was introduced, and my ancestors happened to live at a period prior to the breaking of stones on high-roads as a business."

"Well, sir, but you have interrupted me, and I forgot what I was going to say. Oh ay! I was going to tell you that my ancestors rode in coaches, when yours drove carts; that mine spent thousands upon thousands, whilst yours were dealing in tarry-woo and candle grease; and yet you, sir—you now sit in this cottage of yours (as you must needs call it)—you have the audacity, and the impertinence, and the presumption, forsooth, to call my son to account for shooting a few of your dirty birds over your poor, paltry acres."

"Ma'am, I only warned him off my preserves, and did it in civil language, too; but your son, taking his cue, I have no doubt, from so accomplished a parent, used improper and ungentlemanly language to me, and threatened to horsewhip me; so I thought it was only justice to myself to put him into the hands of my man of business."

"Your man of business, sir! And who gave you, or your father's son, a man of business, pray? What business may you have to manage, which a servant lass may not conduct to a favourable conclusion with a three-pronged grape?"

"Madam, I will stand this no longer. This house is my own. Depart!"

There she goes, wagging her tail and tossing her head, the Born Idiot!

But here comes a change of person, in

"THE CANTING IDIOT."

But, hush! I hear the voice of psalmody. She has taken to what she terms a "sweet psalm," and must not on any account be disturbed.

It is true that there are odd stories abroad of her early life, and some rather suspicious reports respecting a certain serjeant of a certain regiment. Suspicions, too, have been entertained of her being concerned in the burning of a certain will, by which her husband became possessed of property to a comfortable extent; but she has no family, and of late years has taken to religion, and, some say, occasionally to a less safe stimulant. Be that as it may, Mrs Glaiks is at the head of all manner of female associations of a religious character. She is a perfect adept in judging of young preachers and evangelical discourses. If she pronounce her verdict, the matter is settled; there is no appeal, not even to her poor henpecked husband, whose conscience, every now and then, requires all her care and eloquence to soothe. She has already taken possession of this world by a *trick*, and she means to take the next by *force*. She is urgent with the Lord, in season and out of season, and has been at great pains in converting a handsome young man, who was addicted to wine and its usual accompaniments. She says that she has been the unworthy instrument, in God's hand, of his soul's salvation; and meets with him more frequently in private than John Glaiks approves of. Pass on, Mrs Glaiks—

> "If honest worth to heaven rise,
> Ye'll mend ere ye come near it."

But what a mighty fuss is here! The door flies wide open, till the hinges crack again, as *in* there rolls, in all the majesty of a new suit of clothes, and a mighty self,

"THE POMPOUS IDIOT."

Reader! it is not Samuel Johnson, nor his Leader Bozzie. These were both pompous enough, God knows; but they were not idiots—it is "my Uncle Thomas." My Uncle Thomas was once a colonel in the Galloway Militia, and has long retired in single blessedness, to live upon a small family inheritance, which is scarcely sufficient to support himself, with a *man in livery* and a servant girl, to work his means, and act as chambermaid. My uncle rises every morning at seven, rings his bell, and calls his servant to shave and dress him. All this is done in solemn silence; for it would be presumption in John to utter a word, unless he be spoken to. My uncle, having surveyed his full, round person in the glass, takes possession of his arm-chair, then pokers the fire; looks out at his window; scolds a turkey-cock for spreading his feathers and keeping up a row in the back court; rings the bell again, and says—

"Why, sir, what do you stare at? Let me have breakfast."

Breakfast with my uncle is a serious concern. The cups are not in order; the bread is burned to a cinder; the butter is rancid, and the cream is only fit to feed pigs with. However, he has at last breakfasted, and been again surveyed and brushed by John, and is now prepared for the onerous duties of the day. These consist, first, in taking snuff, which he does regularly with three raps on the box-lid, a gaze around, to see if he is observed, and a knowing plunge of the forefinger and thumb into the midst of the powder. But his box is empty, though in fact half-full, and John, having been well scolded, is despatched to his own shop, Donald Mackechnie's, for the real Irish. The box is im-

pressed with the family arms, and the family motto, "*dum vivo spero.*" At last the supply arrives; his gold-headed cane, presented to him when colonel of the Galloway Militia, is taken in hand; his hat is brushed, and planted in proper attitude on his head; and forth he sallies, in his pepper-and-salt habiliments, to scold the schoolboys for neglecting to take off, or even touch, their hats, as he passes along what he terms his gravel-walk, which is nothing more nor less than a cart-road leading to a stone-quarry. A cow has escaped from under the care of his keeper, and poor Davie Proudfoot, the herd-boy, is in hot pursuit. The cow is directing her steps, somewhat unceremoniously, towards the colonel's favourite walk, and he is loudly appealed to by the boy, to assist him in "wearing" the brute. My uncle stares with ineffable rage and contempt upon the unfortunate tender of cattle.

"What, sir!—what mean you, sir, to ask a colonel in His Majesty's service *to turn a cow?*"

My uncle has gone, in quest of an appetite, beyond his usual bounds, and having observed a person passing over the grounds of a neighbouring laird, with a gun under his arm, and of a questionable appearance, he determines to inform Lord Douglas, the neighbouring laird, as he usually designates his lordship, of the fact; and for this purpose, in order to receive information, he calls at the door of a cottage. A little girl, about ten years of age, makes her appearance, and is accosted with—

"Lassie, where is your mother?"

"Mither, oh, mither—she's butt the house; but what do you want wi' her?"

"You are an ill-educated girl," says my uncle. "Why don't you say 'sir' to me when you address me? But go and tell your mother to speak to me—away!"

"Mither! mither! haste and come here—there's a *man* wantin to speak to you.

This was more than my uncle could stand: so he instantly decamped, gold-headed cane and all, to ruminate over the indignities to which he had been subjected.

"Go," said he one day to John, when acting as butler to the colonel, his master, and the young laird of Puddentuscal, who had been invited to dinner—"go to catacomb seventeen, and bring us a bottle of vintage twenty-six."

"Catacomb here, and vintage there," replied John, with a comical expression on his face, "that's the last bottle on the table I've got frae Peter Cruikshanks, for the twa cheeses we selt him."

My uncle died one day, but had taken previous care to have himself carried shoulder-high to the grave. "*Sic transit gloria mundi!*"

"Miss Smiles! Oh, Miss Smiles, I am happy to see you, you have been *such* a stranger! But how is your mother? I was sorry to hear of her late dangerous indisposition, and that you were obliged to call in the assistance of a doctor."

"Oh yes," replies

"THE SIMPERING IDIOT,"

with an everlasting smile on her countenance. "Poor mamma was so ill!—he—he—he! we really thought she would have died—he! But then Dr Blister was so attentive and funny. Oh la!—oh la! how he did laugh, and made such a deal of fun, that poor mamma absolutely sat up in bed, and he!—he!—he!—laughed, absolutely laughed outright. But, really, Mrs Wotton, really that is such a beautiful little pony which you have got feeding on the green, and it looked so comical at me in passing—he! he!—and your little boy, Bobby, rides it so gracefully—ha! ha!—and he fell so prettily. But be not alarmed, Mrs Wotton, the boy is only a little, just a very little hurt about the head—he! he! —only about the head, ma'am. I assure you don't be

alarmed. Pray—pray, don't!—he!—he! I think I see little Bobby tumbling heels up, head down. A pretty boy, indeed, your little Bobby. But, bless me, Mrs Wotton, don't ring the bell—he!—he! I saw Bobby carefully carried into the gardener's cottage at the gate, with the whip still in his hand, and—but he did not bleed severely——Oh la! —oh la! I hope I have not alarmed you, ma'am. Good-morning—good-morning."

There goes that insensible piece of everlasting giggle. She has no more heart than that poker, and no more mercy than an enraged cobbler, making use of it to chastise a drunken spouse. There she goes from house to house, from morn to night, with all the external marks of contentment and high delight, and yet with an inward feeling of envy and ill-will, which is a perfect hell. But here comes, with a copy of the "Laus Stultitiæ" by Erasmus, in one pocket, and a play of Æschylus in the other,

"THE PEDANTIC IDIOT,"

Oxford bred—pure Oxford, ma'am. You cannot possibly utter a sentiment which he does not roll you off in pure Iambics, nor mention a fact which does not suggest another, at least eighteen centuries old.

"The day is very fine, ma'am, very fine indeed. 'And thus, from day to day'—you remember the quotation in Shakspere—it is prettily said, but not delicately. I do not like the words 'rot, and rot;' yet, if one take into account the age, ma'am, the age of Shakspere—I don't mean the years which he lived, but the age of the world in which he lived—if you take into consideration the age, such words as rot were not deemed ungenteel. 'Like a bare bodkin,' and 'groan and sweat'—all these phrases have got somehow into bad repute now; but they were once seen in the most polite company. Have you read the 'Laus Stultitiæ' of Erasmus, sir; or, as it is more frequently expressed in Greek

terms, the Encomium Moriæ? It is quite unique, sir; so full of genuine fun, expressed in beautiful Latin, with scraps of Greek intermixed. What think you of the 'Prometheus' of Euripides?—is it not sublime and terrific?—such a thunder of language and meaning intermingled! These old fellows—these ancients—were the boys. What are our moderns to them? What is Southey to Virgil, or Scott to Homer, Tom Moore to Anacreon, or the lyrics of Burns to those of Horace? Oh, *fons Blandusiæ!* how soft, how sweet, how beautifully *simplex munditiis!* And then his '*quem verum aut heroa,*' '*Cœlo tonantem credimus Jovem.*' But I am, perhaps, trespassing on your patience; if so, I ask your pardon, and bid you good-morning."

There he goes—a creature of nut-shells, one who deals with the husk but never with the kernel—a bag of chaff, with scarcely a per-centage of honest grain—a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal—a thing of shreds and patches—a Joseph's coat of many colours. I was heartily tired of the classical pedant; but there are pedants, ma'am, in all situations and professions. There are even pedantic chimney-sweeps—men in sooty garb, who brandish the brush and display the dirt-bag with an air of importance, and whose loud and penetrating "sweep" has a peculiar force with it. There is, for example, your next neighbour, Mrs Manage, who makes more cheeses from less milk than any one of her neighbours; whose butter has a higher flavour than any in the market; and who kills you, from morn to night, with plans of savings, and profits, and improvements. She even rides her hobby whilst asleep; for she often starts, and mutters the name of a favourite milcher. And there is Mr Clark. Ah, my dear, good-natured, companionable, ever-to-be-remembered Mr Clark! You were indeed the prince of fishers. You had travelled over a great part of Scotland, like my friend Stodart, fishing; and, really and in truth, you had done and seen wonders. I am sorry, very

sorry, indeed, to place you amongst the "pedants;" but truth, my dear sir—my dear shade, compels me to do so. Set you once upon fishing, and there was no end of it—from Dan to Beersheba, on you went. Here you killed a salmon of fourteen pounds weight, after playing him up pool and down stream for at least six hours; there, you hooked another, which broke your line, and curvetted away to the tune of

> "I care for nobody, no not I,
> If nobody cares for me."

Again, you filled your basket ere twelve o'clock, and gave up fishing merely because you could carry no more. And then, such adventures! One day you lost yourself in the mist—found a tethered horse—wandered for hours, and then encountered the same tethered horse again. At another time, you came upon a cottage in the muirland with a lame crow; and, after much wandering, came again upon the same object. You once changed your flies *three* times, and at last pulled *him* out by a knot upon the line, at which he took *greedily*. Was it not you who filled your basket with trouts of a pound weight each, and then, in leaning over a bank to land another, your basket-pin gave way, and they all tumbled dead into the gullet? Did not you jump *in* after them; and were you not carried down into the bumbling pool; and had it not been that you got a hold of a *heather cow*, would not you have been absolutely drowned? After all this testimony, which you know—I mean *knew* (alas! my dear friend, that I should say *knew!*)—to be true, can I avoid placing you amongst the *fishing pedants?* Yet, as the angel did in Sterne (an angel who has had a deal of work to do in his time), do I now drop a tear upon what I have written, and all *but* blot it out for ever. Honest Mr Clark! you were indeed the king of fishers; but, then, all your fish weighed fisher's weight—you added at least seventy-five per cent. to the avoirdupois!

But golfers! Golfers, of all pedants who infest earth or purgatory, are the most intolerable. During dinner, you hear the distant grumble of thunder; there is a word or two dropped, of this hole and that hole—of this stroke and that stroke—of this tee and that tee; but so soon as the glass has circulated a little, you are all mish-mash, helter-skelter, at it again. Done—done! is the word on the match; shillings, pounds, and guineas fly about like midges in harvest sunshine. Some one tries to introduce general conversation, by observing that the coronation went well off; but it is all to no purpose. Their voice is not heard in the general uproar. The very table seems to take an interest in the hubbub, and responds to the clenched fist with a peculiar hollow sound. If this be not pedantry, I know nothing of the subject. The Old Commodore, a second Uncle Toby, was a pedant; and so was Willie Herdman, who had fought as a common soldier at the siege of Gibraltar; and Jumping Jenny was a pedant, who had not an idea beyond a reel and a fling; and Willie Crosbie was a pedant, who could talk of nothing but ewes and gimmers; and Geordie Johnston was a pedant, who valued himself on his small ankles, and nice lambs'-wool stockings; and Archy Tait was a pedant, who kept up a nightly intercourse with the devil and all manner of bogles. But time and paper (which is more precious than time, never to speak of the printing) would fail me, were I to reveal to you the thousandth part of the cases in which pedantic idiocy appears. Turn we now, therefore, to another species of the same genus, to the "SARCASTICAL JESTER," who, though he has not yet obtained a name amongst the notables, is, undeniably, the greatest and most offensive Idiot of the whole batch.

We must approach him slily, for he is an exceedingly cunning fellow; and, when you least think of it, he will be bowing you off to some third party, whom, in his turn, he

will again be showing off to you. Dean Swift's housemaid was one of this class, who pinned a dish-clout to the tail of Dr Sheridan, and pointed him out as an object of ridicule to all the servants. Nay, Satan himself was a master of works on the occasion, when he said "eat, and be wise," well knowing that his advice was folly, and obedience to it death. The practical jester is not a man of many words, but he looks two ways for Sabbath. He will tread upon your corny toe, and then ask your pardon, looking all the while slily to his companion, who is in the secret. He will call you *Kettle of Barclay*, instead of *Barclay of Kettle*—aware, as he is, that you value yourself upon your title. He will, above all this, practise upon you his great leading joke of *Johnnie Hastie's shears.* You are sitting beside him upon the top of a coach, and thinking of nothing but the crops, the fields, and the cottages. All at once, you spring to your feet with a shout, and are precipitated over the driver's seat upon the backs of the horses. All that he did, or was doing, was to give you a clip of Johnnie Hastie's shears. Good reader (for all readers of those Tales are good, like the Tales themselves), dost thou know anything about Johnnie Hastie or his shears? I shall tell thee.

He was a tailor in the Parish of Crail, famous for fish and herrings—a real cankered body, but with about an equal quantity of humour or malevolent wit. Whenever he found a proper opportunity, he used to bend his fore and middle fingers, and then, protruding the middle joint, and opening or separating the one from the other, he used to apply this instrument to the fleshy and most sensitive part of any person who might happen to sit near him, and, by compressing suddenly the joints and fingers, gave the impression of severe clipping. This he denominated a clip of Johnnie Hastie's shears; and hence arose the by-word. An incident or two of this sort it may not be improper to mention.

It is well known that hiccuping is an unpleasant but a pertinacious complaint, and that it proceeds from many causes as well as from a too liberal indulgence in wine. A person who happened to be at the time afflicted with this convulsive movement was suddenly struck on the back, by a practical jester, by way of surprising him out of the distemper. The stroke, however, happened to introduce a small piece of nut kernel, which he was eating, into his windpipe, and it was not without much suffering that it was at last extracted. Another came up to a man of peculiar habits and feelings, observing that he was looking very ill; and then, meeting him again next day, and a third, and a fourth, made the same observation. The poor nervous creature took it sadly to heart, went to bed, and never rose again. He died from the fear of death. At the siege of Toulon—when balls flew about in abundance—after the battle was over, and our ships were forced, by the infant Hercules, Bonaparte, to retreat, an officer went up to his companion, who was standing with his back towards him in the dark, and slapped him suddenly on the back betwixt the shoulders. The person suddenly struck jumped up on the deck, and shouting, "Shot at last, by God!" he died on the spot.

Jeanie Gibson and William Laidlaw were lovers, not in any particular sentimental manner, but just in the old-fashioned way. They liked each other's company, sat very close to each other in the dark, and occasionally indulged in an innocent kiss! But Jeanie was what is called "bonny," and had more lovers than Willie Laidlaw; one of whom, Bob Paton, a sly, unfeeling rogue, of the practical-jesting kind, was over head-and-ears in love with bonny Jeanie. He took it into his head that he would play a trick upon Jeanie, and make her avow at once her preference for Willie Laidlaw, whom she only in secret favoured. For this purpose, he dressed up a figure in what (in the

dark) might appear to be the clothes of Willie Laidlaw, and placed it in a field through which he knew Laidlaw was to pass. He armed himself with a gun, duly charged with powder and shot. Firm prepared, he advanced into the field or park, well knowing that Jeanie Gibson was not only within *sight*, but within *hearing* of him, being seated under the cover of a stone dyke hard by.

"Where are you going, William?" said the practical jester. "I know where you are going; you are going to meet wi' Jeanie Gibson; but I'll blaw your brains out first." Thus saying, he fired off his musket, and the figure immediately fell.

A wild scream was all that was heard, and Jeanie was found lifeless: no, much worse—deprived of reason for life! She never recovered; but when her lover was brought into her presence, always said—

"I know—I know it is not my Willie. I saw—I saw him fa'! It isna him; it canna be him. He's awa—awa—awa!" And then she uniformly fainted.

Nor did the practical jester escape. Willie actually shot him, and was hanged on Lockerby Muir for the deed.

Finis coronat opus—to conclude, I shall e'en take off myself under the character of

"THE SCRIBBLING IDIOT."

He is always meditating something great, but never carries it into execution. One day he commences a heroic poem, which terminates the next in a rebus or sonnet. One day he becomes a dramatist, and pens a scene of a play on the escape of James the Fifth from the palace of Falkland; the next he writes an article for the "Tales of the Borders." Now he undertakes a history of the eight-and-twenty years' persecution—gets out numerous books from the library—actually writes a preface and a conclusion in fine style, which ends in a few lines in the poet's corner of a country

newspaper. He sketches a poem, to be entitled, "Gratitude"—in which dogs, elephants, lions, and even horses, as well as men and women, are to figure; but he never gets on further than four very indifferent lines. He is sixty years old; and at sixteen could write as well and cleverly as he does now. He never takes time to correct *vetere stylum*, he is always in such a confounded hurry lest his idea should escape him ere he has given it a black coat and a white waistcoat. Nobody can equal him in rapidity of composition; but, then, his composition is like the man's horse, with two faults—"it is very ill to catch, and not worth a penny when caught." He does everything for everybody; writes all manner of reviews of books which he has never read, and quotes authorities which he has never consulted. He gets daily into scrapes by making use of people's names about whom he knows nothing, and who abhor, or pretend to abhor, notoriety. One day he is all devotion and sentiment, the next all fun and frolic. He spends his life in an endless whirl of fancies, meditations, resolves, attempts, and finds himself every hour less respected; and, indeed, less respectable than he once was. The worst of it is, "he knows that he is an idiot;" but the knowledge does him no manner of good. He takes a tumbler or two; and then he is, in his own estimation, the very acme of genius! He knows that, had he possessed perseverance, he might have done much; and this knowledge, instead of stimulating, paralyses all manner of effect. His life is a dream; and when he dies, he will be instantly forgotten. He will set like an equatorial sun, and there will be no twilight over his memory.

But "*latet dolus in generalibus*"—I set out in life with excellent prospects—had gained the patronage of a nobleman who had at least twenty kirks in his gift. In these days the Veto had not shown its appalling phiz. I had the absolute promise of a kirk, which was sure to be vacant in

a year or two. But nothing would serve me but I would write some satirical verses on a scolding wife, whom I knew only by report. I sent the following lines to some magazine of the day.

TUNE—"*Roy's Wife of Aldivalloch.*

"Tam's wife o' Puddentuscal*—
Tam's wife o' Puddentuscal,
Wat ye how she rated me,
And ca'ed me baith a loon and rascal!

"Her words gaed through me like a sword—
She said she'd gnash our heads together.
Had I sic wife, upon my word,
I'd twist her chanter in a tether.
Tam's wife, &c.

"I did but pree her dinner cheer,
And hadna drunk twa jugs o' toddy,
When *in* she bang'd like ony bear—
Oh, she is an awsome body!
Tam's wife, &c.

"I took my bonnet and the road,
And to my waefu fate resign'd me;
When, what think ye, the raging jade
Daddit *to* the door behind me?
Tam's wife o' Puddentuscal—
Tam's wife o' Puddentuscal,
Wat ye how she rated me,
And ca'ed me baith a loon and rascal.

Now this song happened to take in the neighbourhood, and was reckoned severe and clever. The murder came out in a few weeks. I received the following letter from Lord C——:—

"SIR,—I hear you have been lampooning, in a periodical work, a person in whom Lady C—— takes a deep interest. I consider myself relieved from any obligations which your past services may have imposed upon me.—I remain, &c.'

* Name of a farm.

My lord was as good as his word, and that I am now

"Within my noisy mansion skill'd to rule,"

instead of appearing sleek, fat, and comfortable at the General Assembly now sitting, is owing to my scribbling propensities.

But there is yet one other idiot, with whose character I might close "this strange, eventful history"—an idiot decidedly the most prominent of all—an idiot who, in modern times in particular, has proved his claims on my notice to an unusual extent—an idiot, too, without whose idiocy mine were literally a dead letter: Reader! gentle reader!—"*Quid rides—nomine mutato de* TE"—that is, if you are *displeased;* if not, you are an angel!

THE FLOSHEND INN.

About the middle of the last century, and previous to it, the truly national trade of carrying the pack was, as doubtless many of our readers know, both much more general and respectable than it now is. It did not then, by any means, occupy the low place in the scale of traffic to which modern pride, and perhaps modern improvement, have reduced it At the period to which we allude, those engaged in this trade were for the most part men of good substance and of unimpeachable character, trustworthy, and, in their humble sphere, highly respectable—circumstances which, doubtless, imparted to their calling the consideration which it then enjoyed. The reason lies on the surface: the trade was then both a more extensive and a more important one than it is now, and required a much greater capital; for there being then none of those rapid and commodious conveyances for transporting merchandise from place to place which are now everywhere to be met with, the greater part of this business was then done by the packmen, who combined the two characters of merchants and carriers; and in this double capacity supplied many of the shops of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and other large towns, with English manufactures. Those, therefore, who would conceive of the packman of old, an indifferently-clad and equivocal-looking fellow, with a wooden box on his back, containing his whole stock, would form a very erroneous idea of the peripatetic merchant. Their conception would not, in truth, represent the man at all. The packman of yore kept two or three horses, and these he loaded with his merchandise, to the value often of several thousand pounds; and thus he pe-

rambulated the country, passing between Scotland and England, conveying the goods of the one to the other; and thus maintaining the commercial intercourse of the two kingdoms.

About the year 1746, this trade had arrived at so great a height, that the high-road to England by Gretna Green was thronged with those engaged in it, going to and returning from the sister kingdom with their loaded ponies; and a merry and bustling time of it they kept at the Floshend Inn. This hostelry, now extinct, was long a favourite resort of these packmen, or pack-carriers, as they were more generally or more properly called. It was situated on the Scottish side of the Borders, near to Gretna Green, and was kept by a very civil and obliging person, of the luminous name of John Gas—a little, fat, good-humoured, landlord-looking body, with a countenance strongly expressive of his comfortable condition, having a capital business, and being very much at his ease, both in mind and body. His house was a favourite resort of the pack-carriers; and for good reasons. It was the last inn of any note on the Scottish side, and was, of consequence, the first they came to on re-entering their native country from their expeditions into England. The quarters, besides, were in themselves excellent; the accommodations were good, and the fare abundant, reasonable, and of the first quality—especially the liquor, that great *sine qua non* of good cheer. In addition to all this, John Gas himself was the very pink of landlords; humorous, kind, attentive, and obliging; possessing that valuable quality of being able to stand almost any given quantity of drink, which enabled him to distribute his presence and his company over any number of successive guests. Fresh as a bedewed daisy, and steady as a wave-beaten rock, he was always forthcoming, whatever might have been the amount of previous duty he had performed; and what might remain yet to do he always overtook, and executed with credit to

himself, and satisfaction to his customers—no instance having been known of his having been placed *hors de combat*, either by ale-cup or brandy-bottle. With such claims on public patronage, it was no wonder that his house secured so large a share of the custom of the itinerant merchants of the time; who, so much did they appreciate the comforts of the Floshend Inn, and so much were they alive to the merits of its host, that they would not rest, foul or fair, dark or light, anywhere within ten miles of it. A dozen of them were thus frequently assembled together at the same time under the hospitable roof; and, being all known to each other, they formed, on such occasions, a merry corps—spending freely, and sitting down all together at the same table. A more amusing or more entertaining company could, perhaps, nowhere be found; for they were all shrewd, intelligent men—their profession and their wandering lives putting them in possession of a vast store of curious adventure and anecdote, and throwing many sights in their way which escape the local fixtures of the human race. Naturally of a gossiping turn—a propensity made particularly evident when they chanced to meet together in such a way as we have described—they were in the habit of amusing each other with narratives of what they had seen and heard that was strange, and enlivening the evening with merry tale and jest.

It was somewhere about the month of March, in the year 1750, that a knot of these worthies, consisting of seven or eight, was assembled in the cheerful kitchen of the Floshend Inn—an apartment they preferred for its superior comfort, its blazing fire, and its freedom from all restraint. Some of the guests present on this occasion were on their way to England; others had just returned from it, with packs of Manchester goods, and large bales of Kendal leather. These last, and all other descriptions of merchandise which his pack-carrier customers brought, were stowed in a large room

in the inn, which the landlord had very judiciously and very properly appropriated for this purpose; while the horses that bore them were comfortably quartered in the commodious and well-ordered stables. They were seated on either side of the fire, with a small round table between them, on which stood a circle of glasses; in the centre, a smoking jug, whose contents may be readily guessed; and close by the table was the landlord, doing the honours of the occasion—that is, making the brandy-toddy, and filling the glasses of his guests. The master of ceremonies was in great glee, being precisely in his element, the situation of all others in which he most delighted—a bowl of good liquor before him, a set of merry good friends around him, and the prospect of a neat, snug reckoning in perspective. The conversation amongst the guests was general; but it might have been observed that one of the party had got the ear of the landlord, and was telling him, in an under-tone, some curious story; for the latter, with head inclined towards the facetious narrator, was chuckling and smirking at every turn of the humorous tale. At length a sudden roar of laughter at once announced its consummation, and attracted towards himself the general attention of the company.

"What's that, mine host?" was an inquiry put by three or four at once. "Something guid, I warrant; for that was a hearty ane." The speaker meant Mr Gas's laugh. "What was't?"

"It's a story," replied he, the tears still standing in his eyes, "that Andrew here has been tellin me, aboot the minister o' Kirkfodden and his servant lass—and a very guid ane it is. Andrew, will I tell it?" he added, turning round to the person who had told him the story.

"Surely, surely," replied Andrew; "let it gang to the general guid."

Aweel, freends (said mine host, now confronting his auditors), the minister o' Kirkfodden, ye maun ken, is,

though a clergyman, a droll sort o' body, and very fond o' a curious story, and still fonder o' a guid joke—and no a whit the waur is he o' that; for he is a guid, worthy man, as I mysel ken. The minister had a servant lass they ca'd Jenny Waterstone — a young, guid-lookin, decent, active quean; and she had a sweetheart o' the name o' David Widrow—a neighbourin ploughman lad, a very decent chield in his way—wha used to come skulkin aboot the manse at nichts, to get a sicht and a word o' Jenny, without ony objection on the part o' the minister, wha believed it to be, as it really was, an honourable courtship on baith sides. Ae nicht, being later in his garden than usual—indeed, until it got pretty dark—the minister's attention was suddenly attracted by a loud whisperin on the ither side o' the garden wa', just opposite to where he stood. He listened a moment, and soon discovered that the whisperers were David Widrow and his servant, and overheard, as the nicht was uncommonly lown, the followin conversation between the lovin pair:—

"I fear, Jenny," said David, "that the minister winna be owre weel pleased to see me comin sae aften aboot the house."

"I dinna think he'll be ill pleased," replied Jenny. "He's no ane o' that kind."

"Still," said David, "I had better let the nicht fa', now and then, before I come; and then he'll no see me mair than four times a-week or sae. He canna count that bein very troublesome."

"Just as ye like, David," said she.

"But how am I to let ye ken I'm here?" inquired the lover.

"Ye can just gie a rap at the kitchen window, and I'll come oot to ye," replied the girl.

"Very weel," said David; "I'll come and rap at the back window the morn's nicht."

"Do sae," replied she; "and, if I canna get oot to ye at the moment, just step into the barn till I come. I'll leave the door open for ye."

This matter arranged, the lovers parted, little suspectin wha had overheard them; and the minister went into the house. On the followin evenin, a little after dark, the doctor, closely wrapped up in a plaid belongin to his servin-man, slipped oot, and, stealin up behind the house, till he cam to the kitchen window, gave the preconcerted signal, by gently tappin on it with his fingers. Jenny, who was employed at the moment in bottlin aff a sma' cask o' choice strong ale, for his ain particular use, immediately answered the ca', raised the window, and put oot her head.

"Is that you, David?" said she.

"Yes," said the minister, in a whisper so gentle as to prevent her recognisin his voice.

"I canna get to ye at present," said Jenny; "for I'm engaged bottlin some ale, and maun put it a' past before I gang oot; the minister's waitin till I tak it up the stair; but love maks clever hands, as they say, and I'll gie ye something to keep ye frae wearyin, in the meantime, till I come." Sayin this she handed him oot a bottle o' the ale, and a basket containin some cakes and cheese. "Now," said she, "tak thae awa to the barn wi' ye, David, and tak a bite and a sowp till I come." And she drew down the window, and resumed her work. The minister, without sayin a word, retired wi' his booty, and placed it in a dark corner at a little distance. In a short time he again returned to the window, and again rapped. The window was promptly thrown up, and Jenny's head thrust oot.

"Can ye gie's anither bottle, Jenny?" said the minister, speakin as low as before, and disguisin his voice as well as he could.

"Anither bottle, David!" exclaimed Jenny, in surprise. "Gude save us frae a' evil! hae ye finished a hail bottle

already? My troth, that's clever wark! But I canna gie ye anither the nicht, David. It's a' put past. Besides, ye hae aneugh for ae nicht."

"Weel, weel," said the minister; "come oot as sune as ye can, Jenny." And he again slippit awa.

Thinkin, now, that he couldna carry the joke farther wi' safety, as there was great risk o' the real David appearin, the minister slippit into the house, threw aff his plaid, and went to a little back window that was immediately over the kitchen ane, from which he could, by a little cautious management, both see and overhear, unobserved, all that should pass between Jenny and her lover, when *he* came on the stage. Nor had he to wait long for this. In a few minutes after he had taken his station, he saw David come round the corner o' the house, and steal, wi' cautious steps, towards the kitchen-window. He rapped. The window was raised, but evidently wi' some impatience.

"Gude bless me, Davie! are ye there again already?" said Jenny, somewhat testily. "Dear me, man, can ye no hae patience a bit? I'll come to ye immediately." And, without waitin for ony answer, she again banged doun the window.

David was confounded at this treatment; but, as Jenny had gien him nae time to mak ony remark for her edification, he made ane or twa for his ain.

"Here *again!*" he said, mutterin to himself—"here *already!* Can I no hae patience!" Then, after a pause, "What does the woman mean? What *can* she mean?"

This was a question, however, which Jenny hersel only could explain; and for this explanation David had to wait wi' what patience he could conveniently spare. But he certainly hadna to tarry lang; for, in twa or three minutes after, a soft, low voice was heard sayin—

"Whar are ye, David?"

"Here," quoth David, in the same cautious voice.

"Dear me, man," said Jenny, "what was a' yer hurry? I'm sure ae rap at the window was as guid as twenty. Ye micht hae been sure I wad come to ye as sune as I could."

"Hurry, Jenny! What do ye mean? I was only ance at the window," replied David. "Ye surely canna ca' that impatience."

"Ye're fou, Davie; that's plain," said Jenny. "The bottle o' ale has gane to your head, and ye've forgotten. Nae wonder; it wasna sma' beer, I warrant ye, but real double stoot. Catch the minister drinkin onything else! Thae black-coats ken what's guid for them." And, without waitin for ony answer, she proceeded—"But whar hae ye left the basket, Davie? Is't in the barn?"

"Jenny," said David, now perfectly bewildered by all this, to him, wholly incomprehensible ravin, "ye say I'm fou; but, if I'm no greatly mistaen, ye're the fouest o' the twa." And he peered into her face, to see how far appearances would confirm his conjectures.

"Awa wi' ye, ye stupid gowk!" said Jenny, pushin him good-naturedly from her. "Ye're just as fou's the Baltic —that's plain. But tell me, man, whar ye put the basket; for it may be missed? I houp ye haena forgotten that tae?"

"Jenny," replied David, now somewhat mair sincerely, "will ye tell me at ance what ye mean? What bottles o' ale and baskets are ye speakin aboot?"

"Ha! ha! Like as ye dinna ken!" said Jenny, lookin archly, and giein her lover anither push. "That's a guid ane! To drink my ale, and eat my bread and cheese, and then deny it!"

I leave you, guid freends (said the narrator here), to conjecture what were David's feelins, and to conceive what were his looks, while Jenny was thus chargin him wi' ingratitude. I'll no attempt a description o' them. A' this time the minister was lookin owre his window, richt

abune the lovers, and heard every word o' what they said; but he keepit quiet till the argument should come to a crisis. In the meantime the conversation between the lovers proceeded.

"Jenny," said David, in reply to her last remark, "ye're either daft or fou—and that's the end o't. Sae let us speak aboot something else if ye can."

"Do ye mean to say, David," replied Jenny—now getting somewhat serious too, and a little surprised, in her turn, at seein the perfect composure o' her lover, and the utter unconsciousness expressed on his countenance—"do ye mean to say that I didna gie ye a bottle o' ale and a basket o' bread and cheese oot o' the window there, aboot a quarter-o'-an-hour syne?"

"Never saw them, nor heard o' them," replied David, with great coolness.

"Ta! nonsense, man!" said Jenny, with impatient credulity. "And did ye no come and seek anither? and did ye no come three or four times to the window?"

"Naething o' the kind," replied David, briefly, but with the same calmness and composure as before. "I never got a bottle o' ale and a basket o' bread frae ye oot o' that window; I never sought anither frae ye; and I hae been only ance at that window this blessed nicht."

There was nae resistin belief to a disclaimer sae coolly, sae calmly, and sae pointedly made; and Jenny acknowledged this by immediately exclaimin, in the utmost dismay and alarm—

"Lord preserve me, then! wha was't that got them, and whar are they?"

Her queries were instantly answered.

"It was *me* that got them, Jenny; and they're owre in yon corner yonder," said the minister, in a loud whisper, and now thrustin his head oot o' the window.

Jenny looked up for an instant in horror, uttered a loud

scream, and fled. David looked up, too, for a second, and then set after her as fast as he could birr; leavin the facetious, but worthy minister in convulsions o' laughter.

"And that, my freends," here said the merry landlord, "is the story o' the minister o' Kirkfodden and his servant lass, as tauld to me by my guid freend, Andrew, here"—laying his hand kindly on the shoulder of the person he alluded to. The narrator was rewarded for his story, or rather for his manner of telling it—for in this art he excelled—by a continued roar of laughter from his auditory. When this had subsided—

"Come now," he said, "put in yer glasses. The best story's no the waur o' a weetin. It looks as weel again through a glass o' toddy."

The invitation thus humorously given was at once obeyed. In a twinkling a circle of empty glasses, like a *garde du corps*, surrounded the bowl, and were soon replenished, with a dexterity and skill which long practice alone could have given the artist. His well-practised hand and arm skimmed the ponderous vessel as lightly over the glasses as if it had been a cream-pot; filling each of the latter as it went along to exactly the same height—not a drop in or over—with a precision that was truly beautiful to behold.

The glasses, which had thus been scientifically filled, having been again emptied, the landlord suddenly fixed his look on another of his guests, who was sitting up in one of the furthest corners, by the fireside, and to whom his attention had been directed, by observing him musing and smiling at intervals, as if tickled by the suggestions of his imagination. He rightly took them for symptoms of a story, and acted upon this impression.

"James," he said, addressing the person alluded to, who was at the moment gazing abstractedly on the fire, "if I'm no mistaen, ye hae something to tell that micht amuse us.

Ye're lookin like it, at ony rate, if that smirk at the corner o' yer mouth has ony intelligence in't."

James turned round, and, with a smile that was gradually acquiring breadth, said that he was "thinkin aboot Tam Brodie and the kirn."

"I was sure o't," exclaimed the landlord, triumphantly. "What aboot Tam and the kirn, James?"

"There's little in't," replied the other; "but I'll tell it for the guid o' the company." And he immediately went on:—I daresay the maist o' ye here ken Tam Brodie o' the Broomhouse; and them that dinna may now learn that he's a sma' farmer, as weel as unco sma' man, in a certain part o' Annandale. He is in but very indifferent circumstances, and has, on the whole, a sair struggle wi' the warld; but this is no to hinder him, as how should it, frae haein a maist extraordinar fondness for cream; but it ought to hinder him frae takin every opportunity, which he does, o' his wife's bein oot o' the way, to steal frae his ain kirn, to the serious detriment o' his ain interest. His wife entertains the same opinion; for she's obliged to watch him like a cat; and, when she does catch him at the forbidden vessel, or discovers that it has been there—which she often does, by the ring about his mouth, when she has come so suddenly on him as no to gie him time to remove the evidence—she does pepper him sweetly wi' the first thing that comes to her haun; for she's a trimmer, though a weel-behaved, hard-workin woman. A' her watchfuness, however, and a' the wappins she could gie her husband, could neither cure him o' his propensity, nor prevent him indulgin it whenever he thought he could do it without bein detected.

It happened ae day, that Mrs Brodie had some errand to a neighbourin farmhouse, which she behoved to execute personally. Having dressed hersel a little better than ordinary for this purpose, she cam to her husband, who was at the moment delvin in the kailyard behind the house,

told him where she was gaun, and desired him to look after the weans till her return. This task, Tam, of course, readily undertook, and continued to delve awa as composedly as if his wife's proposed absence had suggested nae ither idea to him. He, in short, looked as innocent of a sinister purpose as a man could do; although at that very moment the cunnin little rascal's mind was fu' o' the idea o' makin a dive at the kirn, the moment the wife's back was turned. And he soon made these evil intentions manifest aneugh. While his wife was speakin to him, leavin the bairns in his charge, Tam never raised his head, but continued delvin awa wi' great assiduity. He was, in fact, afraid to lift his head, for fear that his wife should discover his joy on his countenance, and tak some means o' bafflin his designs. Although, however, he didna raise his head while she was speakin to him, he did it the instant she left him. While continuin bent as if in the act o' workin, he looked after her till she disappeared down a brae, at the distance o' aboot a hundred yards, when he stood erect, stuck his spade in the ground, and went wi' deliberate step into the hoose. This deliberation, however, did not proceed so much from a consciousness o' security, as to prevent excitin suspicion o' his ain weans, whom he did not wish to trust wi' the secret o' his intended depredations on the kirn, for fear they should tell their mother, as, had they known it, they certainly would—perhaps not deliberately, but they would blab it. This risk, therefore, he resolved not to run. On enterin the kitchen whar the weans war, to the number o' three or four—

"What keeps ye a' in the hoose sic a nice bonny day as this?" said he; "awa and play yersels in the yard for a wee; and, as I'm wearied, and gaun to rest mysel, ye can come and tell me whan ye see yer mither comin. Ye can see her, ye ken, frae the tap o' the yard a lang way aff. Now," he said, addressin the last o' the urchins, as they scampered

oot, in obedience to their father's commands—"now mind, and let me ken *the moment* your mither comes in sicht." The boy promised, and rushed out after his brothers and sisters. The coast was now clear; Tam's progress thus far was triumphant. He had never had before sae fair a field for operations, and he felt a' the satisfaction that his happy situation was capable o' affordin.

Havin got the weans oot, he advanced to the door, shut it, and, to prevent any unseasonable intrusion, locked it—at least he thocht he had done so, but the bolt had missed. Unaware o' this circumstance, he proceeded to his operations wi' a feelin o' perfect security. Havin gone into the room where the kirn was, he lifted the large stone by which the lid was kept down, and placed it on the floor. This done, he lifted the lid itsel, and next the clean white cloth which is usually thrown first on the mouth o' the vessel. These a' removed, the glorious substance appeared—thick, rich, and yellow. The glutton gazed on it a moment with a rapturous eye; but there was no time to be lost. He had provided himsel wi' a small tin jug. This he now dipped into the delicious semi-fluid mass, raised it to his lips, and quaffed it aff as fast as its consistency would admit. Again he dipped and again he swilled; and to make everything as comfortable as possible, he next drew a chair to the kirn, sat down on it, stretched out his legs, and in this luxurious and deliberate attitude proceeded wi' his debauch. While in the act o' pourin down his throat the fifth or sixth jug, wi' his head thrown back, his eye—though half closed, from an overpowerin sense o' enjoyment—caught a glimpse o' a castle o' cakes and a plate filled wi' rolls o' fresh butter, that stood on the upper shelf o' a cupboard fastened high upon the wa' in ane o' the corners o' the apartment. The sight was temptin; for he felt at that moment somewhat hungry, and he thocht, besides, the cakes and butter would eat delightfully wi' the cream—and there is little doot they would.

Filled wi' this new idea, he rose frae his chair and approached the cupboard wi' the intention o' sackin it; but it was owre high for him. (He was a very little man.) This, however, he was perfectly aware o'. So he took a stool in his hand, placed it, and mounted; but was still several inches from the mark. Findin this, he descended, put anither stool on the top o' the first, and, on again mountin, found himself just barely within reach o' the prize. By seizin, however, a fast hold o' ane o' the shelves o' the cupboard by one hand, he found he could raise himsel up sufficiently high to accomplish the purposed robbery wi' the ither. Discoverin this, he grasped the shelf, and was just in the act o' raisin himsel up by its means, when the stool on which he was standin (he had stood owre near the end o't) suddenly canted up, and left him suspended to the cupboard shelf; for he held on like grim death, kickin and spurrin awa in a vain attempt to recover his footin. This was a state o' things that couldna continue lang; either he must come doun himsel, or the cupboard must come doun alang wi' him—and the latter was the upshot. Doun cam the cupboard; wi' everything that was in it—and it was filled wi' cheeny and crystal—smash on the floor wi' a dreadfu crash, and Tam below it. There wasna a hail glass, cup, or plate left; and the rows o' butter were rollin in a' directions through the floor. Here was a pretty business; and the puir culprit knew it. Cantin awa the cupboard frae aboon him, he slowly rose (for he was not at all much hurt) to his feet, infinitely mair distressed wi' fear for his wife's vengeance than wi' regret for his ain loss. At this instant—that is, just as he had gained his feet, and was lookin ruefully doun on the wreck he had occasioned—ane o' his bairns cam runnin to the door, and bawled out the delightfu intelligence—

"Faither, my mother's comin!"

The horrible announcement roused him from his reverie, and instantly put him on the alert. He had presence o'

mind aneugh left to recollect that the cupboard wasna a' he had to answer for. There was the kirn, which, in its present denuded state, told an ugly tale. He flew to remedy this. He snatched up the towel, spread it over the mouth o't, lifted the huge stone with which all had been secured, dashed it down—on what? on the lid? No, in his hurry and confusion he forgot the lid;—on the towel—and doun went towel and stone into the kirn, and the latter with such force as fairly knocked out the bottom, and sent the whole contents streamin owre the floor. At this particularly felicitous moment, his wife entered the outer door, when the first thing she met was the colly dog wi' a row o' the fresh butter in his mouth. In ordinary circumstances, this wad hae been a provokin aneugh sicht to her, but a glimpse at the same instant o' the dreadfu ruin within made it appear but a sma' matter indeed. On enterin on the scene o' devastation, she fand the culprit standin almost senseless and speechless wi' terror and horror, and every other stupifyin feelin that can be named, in the middle o' the ruins he had created, and up to the shoe-mouth in cream.

"An awfu business this, Maggy," he said, in a sepulchral voice. It was a' he got leave to say; for, in the next moment, he was felled wi' the stroke o' a besom; and when he resumed his feet, which he did almost instantly, he took to his heels, and didna venture hame again till wife and weans were a' lang in their beds. Tam ne'er touched the kirn after this.

"And here," said the narrator, "ends my story o' Tam Brodie and the kirn."

"And a very guid ane it is," rejoined the landlord, taking off a cold half-glass of punch that stood before him. "I ken Tam o' the Broomhouse as weel as I ken ony ane here, and it's just as like him as can be. William," added mine host, now turning and addressing another member of the com-

pany—a quiet, mild-looking man, whom one could not, *à priori*, have suspected of being a joker—"that's nearly as guid a ane as the Blue Bonnet. Do ye mind that story?" William shook his head and smiled.

"I mind it weel aneugh," he replied; "but it was rather a serious affair—at least it micht hae been sae—and I'm no fond o' recollectin 't."

"Nonsense, man; nae harm cam o't," said the other; "and it was harmlessly meant."

"But it micht hae been a bad business," said William.

"But it *wasna*," said mine host; "and, as I dinna believe there's ane here that ever heard the story, I wish ye wad let me tell it."

"It's no worth tellin," said the other.

"I'll tak my chance o' that," replied the landlord; "if it's counted worthless, I'll tak the wyte o't. Do ye gie me leave?"

"A wilfu man maun hae his ain way—do as you like," rejoined William Brydon, affectin a chariness he did not altogether feel.

Thus regularly licensed, the narrator began:—

About twa or three years syne, there used to come about this house o' mine a wee bit whupper-snapper body o' an English bagman. An impudent, upsettin brat he was, although no muckle higher than that table. The favourite theme o' this wee ill-tongued rascal—for he had a vile ane—was abusin Scotland, and a' that war in't, for a parcel o' sneakin, hungry, beggarly loons. This was his constant talk wherever he was, and whaever he micht be amang. I didna mind him mysel; for the cratur wasna a bad customer, and he was, besides, such a wretched-lookin body—I mean as to size and figure, for he was aye weel aneugh put on—that puttin a haun to him was oot o' the question. Ye couldna hae blawn upon him, but ye wad hae been in for murder, or culpable homicide at the very least. But, although I keepit

a calm sough wi' him, and didna mind his abusive jabberin, it wasna sae wi' everybody; and there was nane bore it waur than oor freend William Brydon here, wha aften forgathered wi' him in this hoose. William couldna endure the cratur, and mony a sair wrangle they had wi' the tongue; but the Englishman's was by far the glibber, though William's was the weightier. It chanced that William and the little gabby Englishman met here, both on their way to England, ae day sune after the execution o' the rebels in Carlisle—a time whan the Scots, as ye a' dootless ken, war in unco bad odour throughoot a' England, and especially in Carlisle, whar the feelin ran sae high that no person wearin ony piece o' dress which smelt in the least o' Scotland was safe in the streets. And wha was sae vindictive against the rascally rebels, as he ca'ed them, as our wee bagman? "Headin and hangin's owre guid for the villains," he wad say. "They should be roasted before a slow fire, like sae mony shouthers o' mutton." Oh, he had a bitter spite at them! It was aboot this time, as I said, that he and our freend here met in my hoose—and, as usual, they had a tremendous yokin; but it was, on this occasion, a' aboot the rebels; for this was the thing uppermost in the wee bagman's mind at the time. It was a grand catch for him, and he made the maist o't. In short, a' his abuse now took this particular direction.

Notwithstandin William and the bagman's constant quarrellin, and their mutual dislike o' each ither, they aye drank thegither whan they met, and whiles took guid scours o't, and lang sederunts; but it wasna for love, ye'll readily believe, they sat thegither: na, na, it was for the purpose o' gettin a guid worryin at ane anither; so that they may be said to hae sought each ither's company oot o' a kind o' lovin hatred to ane anither. In the afternoon o' which I'm speakin, the twa, as usual, drank and quarrelled; but I was surprised to find, towards the end o' their sederunt, that oor freend here, instead o' gettin angrier, as he used to do,

as the contest drew towards a close, grew aye the calmer; and, what astonished me still mair, suddenly showed a strong disposition to curry favour wi' his antagonist, and actually so far succeeded, by dint o' soothin words, as to induce the bagman to extend the hand o' friendship and good-fellowship to him—swearin that William was, after all, a devilish good fellow, for a Scotchman. The bagman, however, was by this time pretty weel on by the head; and this micht hae had some share in producin this new-born kindness for the Scotchman. However this may be, being both anxious to get on to Carlisle that nicht, they agreed—such good freends had they thus suddenly become—to travel together. This settled, their horses were brought to the door. William's packs had been sent on before, and he had hired ane o' my horses to carry him unto Carlisle. Just as they were gaun oot the passage there, to the door to mount, William hings back a bit, lettin the bagman gang on before him, and whispers into my ear—

"I'll play that pockpuddin a pliskie yet. Hae ye such a thing as an auld broad bonnet aboot ye, that ye could lend me?"

Little dreamin what he was gaun to do with it, I replied I had; and runnin into the kitchen here, I took down frae a nail, ane that I used to wear when gaun aboot the garden, and gae it to him. William took it, rowed it up, and thrust it in his pocket, without sayin a word, and, in three minutes after, the twa war aff.

On arrivin within aboot a mile o' Carlisle, Willie proposed to the bagman that they should go into a public-house that was on the roadside, and hae something before they entered the toon, as they required to part a wee on this side o't—William having, he said, some sma' business to do aff the road. To this proposal the Englishman readily agreed, and in they gaed, leavin their horses at the door. Here William plied the bagman—nothing loth, for he was a drucken wee

rascal—wi' brandy till he began to wink, and no to be perfectly certain which end o' him was uppermost. Havin reduced him to this condition, his freend proposed that they should be movin, when they both got up for that purpose.

"Where's my *'at?*" said the bagman, turnin round to look for the article he named.

"Here it's, man," said William, comin behind him, and clappin the bonnet on his head.

"Thank you, freend!" replied the bagman, generously believin that, as he felt *something* put upon his head, it must be his hat; and thus theekit, he walked to the door, and mounted his horse, as grave and composed as if a' was richt, and rode aff wi' William alangside o' him. They hadna ridden far, however, when his friend, for obvious reasons, desirous o' bein quit o' his companion, said he was sorry that they maun now part, he requirin, as he told him before, to turn aff the road a bit. On this they shook hands and parted. The bagman hadna proceeded far wi' the notorious badge o' Scotland—the broad blue bonnet—on his head, till he found himsel, he could not conceive how, an object of marked attention to a' the passers-by. At length, as he approached the town, this attention became gradually more and more alarmin, and began at the same time to be accompanied by such symptoms as plainly evinced that it was not o' a pleasant character.

Popular notice, the bagman very weel saw, he had attained by some means or other; but he also saw as weel that this by no means meant popular admiration; for in every face that was turned towards him there was an angry scowl. Amazed and confounded at bein thus so strangely and disagreeably marked, the poor little Englishman looked first at his legs, and then at his horse, leanin forward for this purpose, and then examined his own outer man all over, to see if he could discern onything wrang wi' either, that micht account for his sudden elevation in the public mind; but he

found nothing—a' was richt, and the little bagman was more perplexed than ever. He rode on, however—as what else could he do?—and at length entered the town. Here the general attention became still more strikingly marked: people stood on the streets and stared broadly at him; and, when he had passed, looked after him, and shook their heads. At length matters came to a crisis. This approached by occasional cries of "Doun wi' the rebel!" "Doun wi' the Scottish cut-throat!" "Hang the robber!" "Head him! head him!" If confounded before, the little bagman was now ten times more so. These terms could never apply to him, and yet they were most palpably directed to him. What on earth could it mean? To be taken, too, for a character which of all others he most abhorred. It was unaccountable—most extraordinary. In the meantime, both the cries and the crowd increased, till the latter at length fairly surrounded the little bagman and his horse, and peremptorily arrested his progress, still shoutin, but with greater ferocity, "Doun wi' the rebel!"

"Good people," said the perplexed and terrified cratur, "what do you mean? Hear me for a moment. I'm no rebel. I detest them as much as you can do. I am an Englishman—a born Englishman."

"Yes, when it suits your purpose, ye cowardly Scottish dog!" exclaimed one of the crowd, advancin towards him, and seizin him by a leg.

"We know you too well by your head-mark," said a second, bustlin forward to hae a share in forcibly dismounting the wee bagman; a measure which was now evidently contemplated, if not determined on, by the crowd.

"Yes, yes!" shouted a third, "he has the mark o' the beast on him. Doun wi' him! doun wi' him! He can't deny the blue bonnet. Doun wi' it, and the head that's in it!" Seein all eyes at this moment directed to that part o' his person where a hat should have been, the wee bagman

instinctively clapped his hand on his head. It felt strange! There was no superstructure—all was bare and flat. He pulled aff the mysterious coverin, and beheld with horror and amazement a large, broad, Scottish blue bonnet, the size o' a cart wheel, with a red knob, like an overgrown cherry, in the centre o't.

"Ay, where got ye that? where got ye that?" exclaimed some one frae the crowd. But, though the question was put, no answer was permitted to the questioned. In the next instant he was on his back on the street, kickin and strugglin amongst the feet o' his assailants, who applied the latter to all parts o' his person wi' a rapidity and vigour o' execution that threatened, and certainly would hae extinguished, the wee life o' him, if he hadna been rescued a trifle on this side o't by a guard o' sodgers, whom the alarm had brought to the spot.

Battered, bruised, speechless, and his face streamin wi' blood, the unfortunate bit bagman was now conveyed to the guard-house, and from thence, after he had somewhat recovered, to prison, under the same suspicion which had procured him such rough treatment from the mob. So that, to appearance, as they werena very nice in thae times, he was saved frae a violent death only to be subjected to anither; frae bein kicked into the ither warld to be hanged; and o' this opinion the wee bagman was himsel for some time, for the authorities o' Carlisle war at that period excessively loyal, and wadna cared muckle to hae hanged him on chance. As it was, however, he was kept in jail for a week, when his innocence havin been so clearly established that the most loyal o' his judges couldna deny it, he was set at liberty—though wi' a grudge, for they wad still fain hae hanged him—and a caution never to wear a blue bonnet in Carlisle again.

"The wee bagman," added the landlord, "has never come this way since, and I fancy now never will. Come, freends,"

continued he, "shute in your glasses — the drink's gettin cauld; and," he said, edging the mouth of the bowl slopingly towards him, so as to afford him a view of its contents, "there's a gey drap in't yet." Then, with that forethought which was a very remarkable and praiseworthy trait in his character—"Betty," he cried out to a servant girl, "keep the kettle boilin."

His call for the glasses of his friends being promptly obeyed, they were as promptly re-filled, and it is but doing justice to the honest men assembled on this occasion to state, were as speedily emptied again. This done—

"Mr Gas," said Walter Gibson, one of the most extensive traders and most respectable men in the company—"Mr Gas," he said—for they all addressed him as their chairman —"these are a' queer aneugh stories in their way that hae been tell't the nicht; but I'm no sure if there's ony o' them better than the story o' Sandy M'Gill and his mither."

The landlord cocked his ears. "And what story's that, Watty?" he said. "I never heard it."

"It's no the waur o' that, however," said Watty, dryly.

"No a grain," replied the other, with one of his good-natured laughs; "but let us judge for oursels."

"I'll do that," quoth Walter; and he immediately began: — Twa or three years ago, as ye a' ken, Lord Drumlanrig, son o' the Duke o' Queensberry, raised a regiment for what was ca'ed the Holland service. His lordship's headquarters durin the recruitin for the corps was Dumfries, where he used to beat up on the market days. Amongst those who were enlisted on ane o' thae occasions was a young lad o' the name o' Sandy M'Gill—a joiner to trade. Sandy was a handsome, good-lookin young man—very smart and clever, and possessed o' a good education; that is, he wrote and figured weel.

On the regiment being completed, it was embodied at

Dunse, and then drilled for some time. It was then marched to Leith, Sandy M'Gill and a', where it was to be embarked for Amsterdam. Two days after the regiment had left Dunse, Lord Drumlanrig, mounted on horseback, and attended by a servant, also mounted, set out from Dumfries, to join his regiment at Leith, whence he meant to sail wi' it for Holland. On approachin the Nether Mill, his lordship was recognised, while yet at some distance, by an auld blacksmith o' the name o' William Thamson.

"There," said he to a bit lively, hardy-lookin auld wifie —it was Widow M'Gill—"there's Lord Drumlanrig comin forrit."

"Is that him?" quoth the auld wife; "feth and I maun speak to him then! He's taen awa my puir Sandy for a sodger."

And she ran into the middle o' the road, and, ere Lord Drumlanrig was aware, she had his horse by the bridle, exclaimin—

"Please yer lordship, ye maun stop and speak to me a wee. I hae something to say to ye."

"What is it, my good woman?" said his lordship, smilin good-naturedly; "but I'm in a great hurry, and you must not detain me a moment."

"What I want to speak to yer lordship aboot," replied Widow M'Gill, taking nae notice o' his lordship's impatience, "is this: ye hae taen awa my puir son, Sandy, for a sodger, and I'm like to brak my heart aboot him."

"There's nae guid reason for that in the world, my honest woman," said his lordship; "as he'll be better wi' me than lyin at hame here, scartin the porridge pots."

"I'm no sure o' that, my lord, unless ye look weel to him, and tak him under yer special care. Ye'll fin' him weel wordy o't; for, although I say it that sudna say it, he's a clever, weel-inclined lad."

"I've nae doot o't, honest woman, nae doot o't," said his

lordship, now endeavourin to move on; "and, you may depend on't, I'll see that he gets every justice." And he made another attempt to get on.

"Na, na, my lord," said the widow, perceivin his efforts to get quit o' her, "I winna let ye gang that way—I hae something mair to say to ye yet; but, as I see a' the neebors glowrin at us, ye'll just come doon and step into the house wi' me a minute, and I'll tell ye there a' I hae to say."

"Really, really, my good woman," said his lordship, in great alarm at this threat o' further detention, "it is impossible—I cannot on any account—I am indeed in a great hurry, and exceedinly anxious to get forrit."

"Deil may care, my lord!—the deil a fit ye'll stir till ye come in wi' me a bit—on that I'm determined." And she took a still firmer haud o' the bridle."

"Some ither time, my guid woman," said his lordship, despairinly.

"Na, na, nae time like the present, my lord," replied the widow.

Seein now that, unless he had recourse to some violence —which it was neither his nature nor desire to hae—it was useless to contend wi' the resolute auld wife, his lordship dismounted, though, ye may believe, wi' a very bad grace, gave his horse to his servant to haud, and went in wi' Widow M'Gill to her little cot. On enterin the hoose, his lordship made anither desperate effort to prevail on the widow to shorten his detention.

"Now, my guid woman," he said, "let me beg o' you to say quickly what ye hae to say, for I really will not be detained."

"No twa minutes, no twa minutes, my lord," said the widow, dustin, wi' great activity, wi' her apron, a chair for his lordship to sit doun upon.

"No, no; I really will not sit doun," said his lordship, determinedly. "I'll hear what you hae to say standin."

"But ye *maun* sit, my lord," replied the widow, wi' equal resolution. "A bonny thing it wad be, you to come into my house, and gang oot again withoot sittin doun. Na, na, that maunna be said. Doun, my lord, ye maun sit." And, seein that he wad only increase his ain delay by resistance, doun, to be sure, his lordship did sit. "Noo, my lord," says the widow, "I'm sure the deil a morsel o' breakfast ye hae gotten the day yet—for it's no aboon seven o'clock; sae ye'll just tak a mouthfu wi' me."

At this horrid proposal, his lordship sprang frae his chair—for he was noo fairly driven at bay—and made for the door; but the widow was as clever in the heels as he was. She sprang after him, and, before he could gain the door, had him fast by the tails o' the coat, exclaimin, as she pu'ed him back—

"Deil a fit o' ye, my lord, 's gaun oot o' this house, till ye taste my bread and cheese. Ise haud ye fast, I warrant."

Regardless o' her threats, his lordship still pressed for the door; but the stieve auld wife held on wi' a determined and nae feckless grip, and he couldna mak it oot, withoot efforts that micht do her an injury. Seein this, and seein, at the same time, the ludicrousness o' the struggle, his lordship at length gied in, and returned to his seat. In a twinklin the active auld wifie had a table before him, covered wi' bread, butter, and cheese, and a large jug o' sweet milk.

"Noo, my lord, see and tak a mouthfu. It's but hamely fare to put before a lord; but it's gien wi' hearty guid-will, and that maun mak amends."

His lordship guid-naturedly took a little o' what was put before him. While doin this, the auld wifie kept up a runnin fire o' sma'-talk.

"Noo, my lord, ye'll be guid to my son. He's an honest man's bairn, but his faither's dead and gane mony a year

syne; and mony a lonely seat and sair heart has fa'en to my share sin syne; but I aye looked forward to findin a comforter and supporter in my only son, in my auld age; but noo he's taen frae me too, and a' is desolation and darkness around me."

Here the puir widow, whose maternal feelins, thus excited by the picture she had drawn o' her ain loneliness, had suddenly and totally changed her character, or rather had brocht oot its real qualities, which were, after a', those o' a kind and feelin heart, raised the corner o' her apron to her eyes, and wiped awa an involuntary tear. His lordship, notwithstandin o' the provokin predicament in which he was, feelin much affected by the widow's lamentations, thus simply expressed, took oot a memorandum-book frae his pocket, and havin inquired her son's name, and the name o' the place o' her residence, wrote them doun. He next asked if she knew in whose company he was.

"Captain Dooglas," replied the widow—"Captain Dooglas they ca' him." Then, becomin querist in turn—"Do ye ken what sort o' a man he is, my lord?"

"Oh, an excellent man, my guid woman," said his lordship. "Your son could not be under a better fellow." And his lordship noted doun this circumstance also, wi' the name o' Sandy's captain.

Havin dune this, he replaced his memorandum-book in his pocket, and rose frae his seat, the widow noo offerin nae farther resistance; and havin placed, unperceived, as he thought, a couple o' guineas on the table, was aboot to leave the house, after shakin his hostess kindly by the hand—for his lordship was noo rather tickled wi' the adventure athegither—and promisin to see to the interests o' her son, when the widow, gettin her ee on the coin, snatched it up, and was forcin it back on its original possessor, exclaimin—

"Na, na, my lord—I'll tak nae siller for kindness. A' that I want is, that ye wad be guid to my puir Sandy, whan

he's far awa frae his hame and his freends. Be kind till him, my lord, and tak the widow's blessin in return." And she was pressin the money back on his lordship, when he ran frae her, got oot o' the hoose, and was aboot to mount his horse, when, to his unutterable horror, he heard the widow exclaimin, "Gude guide me! I hae a' this time forgotten your servant, my lord; and he'll be hungry aneugh, too, puir fallow, I hae nae doot." And she ran and seized *his* horse next by the bridle. "Come doun, lad, and come in by a bit, and tak a mouthfu. His lordship, I'm sure, 'll wait twa or three minutes on ye without grudgin't; for the puir maun be fed as weel as the rich, the man as weel as his maister."

"No, no, no. For God's sake, my guid woman, let us be gone!" exclaimed his lordship, in an implorin voice, and now beginnin to think he wad never get oot o' the auld wife's hands.

"Na, troth, my lord, I'll no let him go. The lad *maun* hae a mouthfu o' meat."

"Then, in Heaven's name," said his lordship, "if ye will hae him tak something, bring't oot till him here, and dinna tak him aff his horse."

Complyin wi' this request, the very first she had complied wi', the auld wifie ran in to the house—his lordship, while she was there, tellin his servant to put at ance into his pocket whatever it micht be—and brought oot a quantity o' bread and cheese, which the man disposed o' as his maister had desired him.

The coast being now clear, his lordship, after again shakin hands wi' the auld wife, and promisin to keep an ee on her son, put spurs to his horse, and darted aff at full speed, as delighted wi' his liberty as if he had escaped frae a highwayman; but, fast as he gaed, it was some seconds before he got oot o' hearin o' the auld wife's voice, bawlin after him, "Now, my lord, dinna forget Sandy—dinna forget Sandy M'Gill."

On gainin some distance, both master and man drew bridle, and laughed heartily at the adventure wi' the auld wife o' the Nether Mill.

Aweel, shortly after, his lordship embarked for Holland with a part o' his regiment—the remainder, amongst which was Sandy M'Gill, proceeding in another vessel—and arrived there, as did the whole corps, in due time, and without any accident.

Some days after the landin, Lord Drumlanrig, at parade one forenoon, after speakin and laughin for a few minutes wi' Captain Douglas in front o' the line, went up to a certain guid-lookin young sodger in that officer's company, and callin him out frae his comrades, asked him his name.

"Sandy M'Gill, my lord," replied the young man, touchin his hat, and somewhat surprised at bein singled out in this way.

"Exactly," said his lordship. "Well, Sandy, I breakfasted in your mother's house on my way frae Dumfries to Edinburgh, just before I left Scotland; and a kind, hearty old woman she is, I assure you."

"I wonder, my lord," said Sandy, blushin, "that my mother could hae had the impudence to tak your lordship into her puir sooty house."

"It was no impudence at all, Sandy—nae such thing. It was oot o' kindness to me and affection for you. The breakfast, however, was an excellent one, and gien wi' a hearty welcome and richt guid-will. But I promised yer mother, Sandy," continued his lordship, "to look after ye, and I mean to do sae. Can you write any?"

Sandy said he could.

"Can you figure?"

Another reply in the affirmative.

"Can ye show me your handwriting? Have ye any specimens upon you?"

Sandy pulled out of his pocket some scraps o' paper that

exhibited his fist. His lordship looked at them, and said the writing was very guid—that it wad do very weel. "Now, then, Sandy," he added, "I'll tell ye what I mean to do for you, to begin wi': there's anither serjeant wanted for your company, and I hae desired Captain Douglas to appoint you. You will get a suit o' claes frae the store, and there's five guineas to you to purchase necessaries, and I hae nae doot ye'll turn oot a guid and brave sodger."

Sandy endeavoured to express his gratitude for the sudden and unexpected fortune; but he couldna. Nor, though he had been able, did his lordship gie him an opportunity; for, anticipatin the lad's embarrassment, he walked awa the moment he had dune speakin.

Next day, Sandy appeared in the uniform o' a non-commissioned officer; and, being now on the road to promotion, returned, at the conclusion o' the war, to his native place, as captain; attributin a' his guid fortune to the breakfast which his mother gae to Lord Drumlanrig at the Nether Mill.

"Aweel, it is really curious how things turn oot sometimes," said lang Jamie Turner, on the conclusion o' the foregoing story—"very curious. Did ye ever hear, Mr Gas," continued Jamie, now addressing his landlord, "hoo Jock Tinwald, a son o' Andrew Tinwald's o' Shaw Hill, recovered forty guineas he ance lost at the Candlemas Fair o' Dumfries?"

"No," said Mr Gas, looking with interest at the speaker. "I never heard that ane."

"It was a gey clever ane," said Jamie Turner, and, without further preface, he proceeded to relate the following adventure:—

On a certain Candlemas Fair, some twa or three years back, auld Tinwald o' Shaw Hill sent his son Jock to Dumfries, wi' forty guineas in a net purse in his pocket, to purchase a couple o' good draught horses. Jock wasna lang in the fair until he fell in wi' twa horses that appeared to be

o' precisely the description he wanted. He inquired their price, found it wasna far beyond the mark, and, finally, after some chaffering, struck a bargain with the seller. This done, the young farmer put his hand into his pocket, to bring out the net purse with the forty guineas. He started, and looked pale. It was not in the pocket in which he thought—nay, in which he was certain he had put it. He searched anither, and anither, and anither, with distraction in his looks. It was in nane o' them—it was lost, gane! He had been robbed. O' this there was nae doubt. Poor Jock was in despair, but it was an evil without a remedy; for he had not the smallest notion when, where, or by whom he had been plundered. There was therefore no help for it; and, feelin this, Jock repaired to a public-house, drowned the recollection of his loss in brandy, and went home at nicht penniless, horseless, and drunk.

Six months after this, the Rude Fair of Dumfries came round; and, in the thick and the thrang o' this fair, micht hae been seen the braid shouthers and the round, healthfu, guid-natured face o' Jock Tinwald. But surely he'll tak care this time how he mingles wi' the crood, or at least keep a sharp ee on his neebors. Not he. There he is, pushin and jostlin awa in the heart o' the very densest mass, wi' an apparent regardlessness o' consequences which is most amazin, considerin the loss he sustained on a former occasion. Nay, not only is he doin this, but he is ostentatiously displayin a purse apparently as well filled as the last one. This does indeed seem the extreme o' folly. But it only *seems* so. It is not without a reason. Jock is not so unguarded as he appears. The truth is, he is just now practisin a ruse which he is not without hope may help him to the recovery o' his forty guineas.

The purse which Jock is so openly sportin is filled not with gold, but with copper. It contains, in short, instead o' guineas, a quantity of farthings, and is thus ostentatiously

displayed in the hope of attractin the notice of the light-fingered gentleman who had relieved him on the former occasion—and with what promise o' success may be guessed frae the followin incident.

On Tinwald's first entering the scene o' the fair, he was marked by two persons o' very equivocal appearance who were hoverin about.

"That," said ane o' them, nudging his neebor wi' his elbow, and inclinin his head towards Tinwald—"that's the flat I *did* at the last Candlemas fair. The easiest handled guse I ever cam across."

"What wad ye think o' our tryin him again?" said the speaker's neebor.

"Wi' a' my heart," replied the other. "He's but a saft ane; but I fear he'll no hae onything on him this time."

At this instant the fears of the pair of pickpockets on this score were relieved by a sight of Jock's purse. It caught their eyes in a moment, and they viewed it with a delight which gentlemen of their profession alone can know. They felt as sure of it as if it were already in their pockets. Dropping all other speculation, therefore, they now commenced dogging Jock, who was fishing away with his purse through the crowd, like an angler with his fly, for the thief of his guineas or some of his gang, whom he had a pretty shrewd notion would not be far off. Jock, however, took care to keep the exhibition of his purse within bounds. He took care not to make an over frequent or suspicious display of it, only occasionally, and then returning it to a certain side pocket of easy access. There was nothing, therefore, which Tinwald was at this moment so anxious for as to feel a hand in the said pocket; and this was a gratification which he was not long denied. A hand was introduced, he felt it, and, turning quickly round, he seized the person to whom it belonged.

"I ken ye, freend," said Jock to his prisoner, in a low

whisper—"I ken ye perfectly weel. It was you that robbed me o' forty guineas in a green net purse at the last Candlemas Fair." (All this was said by Jock at a venture, but by chance was true.) "Now, I say, let me hae the money back quietly, and I'll tak nae mair notice o' the matter; but, if ye dinna, I'll immediately gie the alarm, and hae ye apprehended. Sae tak yer choice, freend. But, mind, there's a rope round your neck: it's hangin at the very least."

"Let me go, then, and follow me," replied the depredator, briefly, and in the same low tone that he had been addressed.

Jock loosed his grasp, and keepin close behind his man, who immediately began threadin his way oot o' the crowd, followed him till they had cleared it; when, dreadin a sudden bolt, he cam up close beside him; and thus the two held on their way, till they cam to a retired part o' the market-place, when the thief suddenly stopped, and, plungin his hand into his bosom, drew oot a leathern bag, from which he counted into the astonished young farmer's hand forty golden guineas. Jock, confounded at his own success, could scarcely believe his eyes when he looked at the precious deposit in his hand; and, in the fulness o' his joy, insisted on giein the thief half-a-mutchkin o' brandy on the head o't. This, however, the latter declined, and, in an instant after, disappeared in the crowd; and Jock never saw mair o' him. And sae ends my story, freends," added lang Jamie Turner.

"And, by my feth, a richt guid ane—a real clever ane," said the landlord, as he filled glasses round, and, rising on his little, short legs, drank to each and all of the company "a soun sleep and a blithe waukenin." In two or three minutes more, the kitchen of the Floshend Inn was cleared of its tenants, and for that night, at any rate, no more was heard in it the sounds of revelry, nor the accompanying glee of the gibe, or jest, or merry tale.

LOTTERY HALL.

I HAD slept on the preceding night at Brampton; and, without entering so far into particulars as to say whether I took the road towards Carlisle, Newcastle, Annan, or to the south, suffice it to say, that, towards evening, and just as I was again beginning to think of a resting-place, I overtook a man sauntering along the road, with his hands behind his back. A single glance informed me that he was not one who earned his bread by the sweat of his brow; but the same glance also told me that he had not bread enough and to spare. His back was covered with a well-worn black coat, the fashion of which belonged to a period at least twelve years preceding the time of which I write. The other parts of his outward man harmonised with his coat as far as apparent age and colour went. His head was covered with a low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat; and on his nose he wore a pair of silver-mounted spectacles. To my mind he presented the picture of a poor scholar, or of gentility in ruins. The lapels of his coat were tinged a little, but only a little, with snuff; which *Flee-up*, or *Beggar's Brown*, as some call it, is very apt to do. In his hands, also, which, as I have said, were behind his back, he held his snuff-box. It is probable that he imagined he had returned it to his pocket after taking a pinch; but he appeared from his very saunter to be a meditative man, and an idea having shot across his brain while in the act of snuff-taking, the box was unconsciously retained in his hand, and placed behind his back. Whether the hands are in the way of contemplation or not, I cannot tell, for I never think, save when my hand holds a pen; yet I have observed that to carry the

hands behind the back is a favourite position with *walking thinkers.* I accordingly set down the gentleman with the road-brimmed hat and silver-mounted spectacles to be a walking thinker; and it is more than probable that I should not have broken in upon his musings (for I am not in the habit of speaking to strangers), had it not been that I observed the snuff-box in his hands, and that mine required replenishing at the time. It is amazing and humiliating to think how uncomfortable, fretful, and miserable the want of a pinch of snuff can make a man!—how dust longs for dust! I had been desiring a pinch for an hour, and here it was presented before me like an unexpected spring in the wilderness. Snuffers are like freemasons—there is a sort of brotherhood among them. The real snuffer will not give a pinch to the mere dipper into other people's boxes, but he will never refuse one to the initiated. Now, I took the measure of the man's mind at a single glance. I discovered something of the pedant in his very stride—it was thoughtful, measured, mathematical; to say nothing of the spectacles, or of his beard, which was of a dark colour, and which had not been visited by the razor for at least two days. I therefore accosted him in the hackneyed but pompous language attributed to Johnson—

"Sir," said I, "permit me to immerge the summits of my digits in your pulveriferous utensil, in order to excite a grateful titillation in my olfactory nerves."

"Cheerfully, sir," returned he, handing me the box, for which, by the way, he first groped in his waistcoat-pocket; "I know what pleasure it is—'*naribus aliquid haurire.*'"

I soon discovered that my companion, to whom a pinch of snuff had thus introduced me, was an agreeable and well-informed man. About a mile before us lay a village in which I intended to take up my quarters for the night, and near the village was a house of considerable dimensions, the appearance of which it would puzzle me to describe. The

architect had evidently set all orders at defiance; it was a mixture of the castle and the cottage—a heap of stones confusedly put together. Around it was a quantity of trees—poplars and Scotch firs; and they appeared to have been planted as promiscuously as the house was built. Its appearance excited my curiosity, and I inquired of my companion what it was called, or to whom it belonged.

"Why, sir," said he, "people generally call it LOTTERY HALL; but the original proprietor intended that it should have been named LUCK'S LODGE. There is rather an interesting story connected with it, if you had time to hear it."

"If the story be as amusing as the appearance of the house," added I, "and you have time to tell it, I shall take time to hear it."

I discovered that my friend with the silver-mounted spectacles kept what he termed an "Establishment for Young Gentlemen" in the neighbourhood—that being the modernised appellation for a boarding-school; though, judging from his appearance, I did not suppose his establishment to be over-filled; and having informed him that I intended to remain for the night at the village inn, I requested him to accompany me, where, after I had made obeisance to a supper—which was a duty that a walk of forty miles strongly prompted me to perform—I should, "enjoying mine ease" like the good old bishop, gladly hear his tale of Lottery Hall.

Therefore, having reached the inn, and partaken of supper and a glass together, after priming each nostril with a separate pinch from the box aforesaid, he thus began:—

Thirty years ago, there dwelt within this village a man named Andrew Donaldson. He was merely a day-labourer upon the estate of the squire to whom the village belongs; but he was a singular man in many respects, and one whose character very few were able to comprehend. You will be surprised when I inform you that the desire to become a

MAN OF FASHION haunted this poor day-labourer like his shadow in the sun. It was the disease of his mind. Now, sir, before proceeding with my story, I shall make a few observations on this plaything and ruler of the world called Fashion. I would describe Fashion to be a deformed little monster with a chameleon skin, bestriding the shoulders of public opinion. Though weak in itself, it has gradually usurped a degree of power that is well-nigh irresistible; and this tyranny prevails, in various forms, but with equal cruelty, over the whole habitable earth. Like a rushing stream, it bears along all ranks and conditions of men, all avocations and professions, and often principles. Fashion is withal a notable courtier, bowing to the strong, and flattering the powerful. Fashion is a mere whim, a conceit, a foible, a toy, a folly; and withal an idol whose worshippers are universal. Wherever introduced, it generally assumes the familiar name of Habit; and many of your great and philosophical men, and certain ill-natured old women, who appear at parties in their wedding-gowns, and despise the very name of Fashion, are each the slaves of sundry habits which once bore the appellation. Should Fashion miss the skirts of a man's coat, it is certain of seizing him by the beard. It is humiliating to the dignity of immortal beings, possessed of capabilities the extent of which is yet unknown, to confess that many of them, professing to be Christians, Jews, Mahometans, or Pagans, are merely the followers in the stream of Fashion; and are Christians or Jews simply because such a religion was after the fashion of their fathers or country. During the present century, it has been the cause of much infidelity and free-thinking; or, rather, as is more frequently the case with its votaries, of *no thinking.* This arose from wisdom and learning being the fashion; and a vast number of brainless people—who could neither be out of the service of their idol, nor yet endure the plodding labour and severe study necessary for the acquiring of wis-

dom and learning, and many of them not even possessing the requisite abilities—in order to be thought at once wise men and philosophers, they pronounced religion to be a cheat, futurity a bugbear, and themselves organic clods. Fashion, indeed, is as capricious as it is tryannical; with one man it plays the infidel, and with another it runs the gauntlet of Bible and missionary meetings or benevolent societies. It is like the Emperor of Austria—a compound of intolerable evil and much good. It attempts to penetrate the mysteries of metaphysics; and it mocks the calculations of the most sagacious chancellor of the exchequer. At the nod of Fashion, ladies change their gloves; and the children of the glove-makers of Worcester go without dinners. At its call they took the shining buckles from their shoes, and they walked in the laced boot, the sandalled slipper, or the tied shoe. Individually, it seemed a small matter whether shoes were fastened with a buckle or with riband; but the small-ware manufacturers found a new harvest, while the buckle-makers of Birmingham and their families, in thousands, were driven through the country, to beg, to steal, to coin, to perish. This was the work of Fashion; and its effects are similar to the present hour. If the cloak drive the shawl from the promenade, Paisley and Bolton may go in sackcloth. Here I may observe that the cry of distress is frequently raised against *bad government*, assuming it to be the cause; when fickle Fashion has alone produced the injury. In such a matter, government was unable to prevent, and is unable to relieve—Fashion defying all its enactments, and the ladies being the sole governors in the case. For, although the world rules man and his business, and Fashion is the ruler of the world, yet the ladies, though the most devoted of its servants, are at the same time the rulers of Fashion. This last assertion may seem a contradiction, but it is not the less true. With simplicity and the graces, Fashion has seldom exhibited any inclination

to cultivate an acquaintance. Now, the ladies being, in their very nature, form, and feature, the living representatives of these virtues, I am the more surprised that they should be the especial patrons of Fashion, seeing that its efforts are more directed to conceal a defect, by making it more deformed, than to lend a charm to elegance, or an adornment to beauty. The lady of fortune follows the tide of Fashion, till she and her husband are within sight of the shores of poverty. The portionless, or the poorly-portioned, maiden presses on in its wake, till she find herself immured in the everlasting garret of an old maid. The well-dressed woman every man admires—the fashionable woman every man fears. Then comes the animal of the male kind, whose coat is cut, whose hair is curled, and his very cravat tied according to the fashion. Away with such shreds and patches of effeminacy! But the fashion for which Andrew Donaldson, the day-labourer, sighed aimed at higher things than this. It grieved him that he was not a better-dressed man and a greater man than the squire on whose estate he earned his daily bread. He was a hard and severe man in his own house: at his frown his wife was submissive, and his children trembled. His family consisted of his wife; three sons, Paul, Peter, and Jacob; and two daughters, Sarah and Rebecca. Though all scriptural names, they had all been so called after his own relations. His earnings did not exceed eight or nine shillings a-week; but even out of this sum he did not permit the one-half to go to the support of his family—and that half was doled out most reluctantly, penny by penny. For twenty years, he had never intrusted his wife with the management or the keeping of a single sixpence. With her, of a verity, money was but a *sight*, and that generally in the smallest coins of the realm. She seldom had an opportunity of contemplating the gracious countenance of His Majesty; and when she had, it was invariably upon copper. If she needed but a penny

to complete the cooking of a dinner, the children had to run for it to the fields, the quarry, or the hedge-side, where their father might be at work; and then it was given with a lecture against their mother's extravagance! Extravagance indeed! to support seven mouths for a week out of five shillings! I have spoken of dinners, and I should tell you that bread was seen in the house but once a-day, and that only of the coarsest kind. Potatoes were the staple commodity, and necessity taught Mrs Donaldson to cook them in twenty different ways; and, although butcher meat was never seen beneath Andrew's roof, with the exception of pork of their own feeding, in a very small portion, once a-week, yet the kindness of the cook in the squire's family, who occasionally presented her with a jar of *kitchen-fee*, enabled her to dish up her potatoes in modes as various and palatable to the hungry as they were creditable to her own ingenuity and frugality. Andrew was a man of no expensive habits himself; he had never been known to spend a penny upon liquor of any kind but once, and that was at the christening of his youngest child, who was baptised in the house; when, it being a cold and stormy night, and the minister having far to ride, and withal being labouring under a cold, he said he would thank Andrew for a glass of spirits. The frugal father thought the last born of his flock had made an expensive entry into existence; but, handing twopence to his son Paul, he desired him to bring a glass of spirits to his reverence. The spirits were brought in a milk-pot; but a milk-pot was an unsightly and an unseemly vessel out of which to ask a minister to drink. The only piece of crystal in the house was a footless wine-glass, out of which a grey linnet drank, and there was no alternative but to take it from the cage, clean it, pour the spirits into it, and hand it, bottomless as it was, to the clergyman—and this was done accordingly. For twenty years, this was all that Andrew Donaldson was known to have spent on ale, wine, or spirits;

and as, from the period that his children had been able to work, he had not contributed a single sixpence of his earnings towards the maintenance of his house, it was generally believed that he could not be worth less than two or three hundred pounds. Where he kept his money, however, or who was his banker, no one could tell. Some believed that he was saving in order to emigrate to Canada, and purchase land; but this was only a surmise. For weeks and months he was frequently wont to manifest the deepest anxiety. His impatience was piteous to behold; but why he was anxious and impatient no one could tell. These fits of anxiety were as frequently succeeded by others of the deepest despondency; and during both, his wife and children feared to look in his face, to speak or move in his presence. As his despondency was wont to wear away, his penuriousness in the same degree increased; and at such periods a penny for the most necessary purpose was obstinately refused.

Such were the life and habits of Andrew Donaldson, until his son Paul, who was the eldest of his family, had attained the age of three-and-twenty, and his daughter Rebecca, the youngest, was seventeen, when, on a Saturday evening, he returned from the market-town, so changed, so elated (though evidently not with strong drink), so kind, so happy, and withal so proud, that his wife and his sons and daughters marvelled, and looked at each other with wonder. He walked backward and forward across the floor, with his arms crossed upon his breast, his head thrown back, yea, he stalked with the majestic stride of a stage-king in a tragedy. He took the fragment of a mirror, which, being fastened in pieces of parchment, hung against the wall, and endeavoured, as he best might, and as its size and its half-triangular, half-circular form would admit, to survey himself from head to foot. His family gazed at him and at each other with increased astonishment.

"The man's possessed!" whispered Mrs Donaldson, in terror.

He thrust his hand into his pocket, he drew out a quantity of silver.

"Go, *Miss* Rebecca," said he, "and order John Bell of the King's Head to send Mister Donaldson a bottle of brandy and a bottle of his best wine, instantly."

His wife gave a sort of scream, his children started to their feet.

"Go!" said he, stamping his foot, and placing the money in her hand—"go! I order you."

They knew his temper, that he was not to be thwarted, and Rebecca obeyed. He continued to walk across the floor with the same stride of importance; he addressed his sons as Master Donaldson, Master Peter, and Master Jacob; and Sarah, who was the best of the family, as Miss Donaldson, He walked up to his wife, and, with a degree of kindness, such as his family had never witnessed before, he clapped her on the shoulder, and said—

"Catherine, you know the proverb, that 'they who look for a silk gown always get a sleeve o't'—I have long looked for one to you, and now

"I'll mak ye lady o' them a'!"

And, in his own unmusical way, he sang a line or two from the "Lass o' Gowrie."

Poor Mrs Donaldson trembled from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. Her looks plainly told that she feared her husband had "gone beside himself." He resumed his march across the floor, stately as an admiral on the quarterdeck, when Rebecca entered with the brandy and the wine.

"What!" said he, again, stamping his foot, "did I not *order* you to *order* John Bell to *send* the bottles?"

Rebecca shook—but he took them from her hand, and ordered her to bring the glasses! I have already noticed

the paucity of glass vessels at Rebecca's baptism. They were not more numerous now; and even the footless glass, out of which the linnet drank, had long ago, with the linnet, gone the way of all flesh and of all glass; and Rebecca placed a white teacup, scored and seamed with age (there were but four in the house), upon the table.

"What! a cup! a cup!" exclaimed he, stamping his foot more vehemently than before; "did I not *order* you to bring *glasses!* Me!—me!—Mister Donaldson drink wine out of a teacup!" And he dashed the cup behind the fire.

"O Paul! Paul!" cried Mrs Donaldson, addressing her first-born, "is yer faither crazed!—will ye no haud him!—shall we send for the doctor, a strait-jacket, or the minister?"

Paul was puzzled: his father did not exactly seem mad; but his conduct, his extravagance, was so unlike anything he had ever seen in him before, that he was troubled on his account, and he rose to reason with him.

"Keep your seat, Master Donaldson," said his father, with the dignity of a duke—"keep your seat, sir; your father is not mad, but before a week go round, the best hat in the village shall be lifted to him."

Paul knew not what to think; but he had been taught to fear and to obey his father, and he obeyed him now. Andrew again handed money to his daughter, and ordered her to go and purchase six tumblers and six wine-glasses. Mrs Donaldson wrung her hands; she no longer doubted that her husband was "beside himself." The crystal, however, was brought, the wine and the brandy were sent round, and the day-labourer made merry with his children.

On the Monday following, he went not out into the fields to his work as usual; but arraying himself in his Sunday attire, he took leave of his family, saying he would be absent for a week. This was as unaccountable as his sending for the wine, the brandy, and the crystal, for no man attended his employment more faithfully than Andrew Donald-

son. For twenty years he had never been absent from his work a single day, Sundays and Fast-days alone excepted. His children communed together, and his wife shed tears; she was certain that something had gone wrong about his head; yet, strange as his actions were, his conversation was rational; and though still imperious, he manifested more affection for them all than he had ever done before. They did not dare to question him as to the change that had come over him, or whither he was going; for at all times his mildest answer to all inquiries was, that "fools and bairns should never see things half done." He departed, therefore, without telling why or whither, simply intimating that he would return within seven days, leaving his family in distress and bewilderment.

Sunday came, but no tidings were heard regarding him. With much heaviness of heart and anxiety of spirit, his sons and daughters proceeded to the church; and while they, with others, yet stood in groups around the churchyard, a stranger gentleman entered. His step was slow and soldier-like. He carried a silken umbrella to screen himself from the sun, for they were then but little used as a protection from rain; few had at that time discovered that they could be so applied. His head was covered with a hat of the most fashionable shape. His hair was thickly powdered, and gathered up behind in a *queue*. His coat, his vest, his breeches, were of silken velvet, and the colour thereof was the kingly purple—moreover, the knees of the last-mentioned article were fastened with silver buckles, which shone as stars as the sun fell upon them. His stockings also were of silk, white as the driven snow; and partly covering these, he wore a pair of boots of the kind called Hessian. In his left hand, as I have said, he carried an umbrella, and in his right he bore a silver-mounted cane.*

* To some this picture may appear exaggerated, but many readers of these Tales will recognise in it a faithful portraiture of the original.

The people gazed with wonder as the stranger paced slowly along the footpath; and, as he approached the door, the sexton lifted his hat, bowed, and walking before him, conducted him to the squire's pew. The gentleman sat down; he placed his umbrella between his knees, his cane by his side, and from his pocket he drew out a silver snuff-box, and a Bible in two volumes, bound in crimson-coloured morocco. As the congregation began to assemble, some looked at the stranger in the squire's seat with wonder. All thought his face was familiar to them. On the countenances of some there was a smile; and from divers parts of the church there issued sounds like the tittering of suppressed laughter. Amongst those who gazed on him were the sons and daughters of Andrew Donaldson. Their cheeks alternately became red, pale, hot, and cold. Their eyes were in a dream, and poor Sarah's head fell, as though she had fainted away, upon the shoulder of her brother Paul. Peter looked at Jacob, and Rebecca hung her head. But the squire and his family entered. They reached the pew —he bowed to the stranger—gazed—started—frowned—ushered his family rudely past him, and beckoned for the gentleman to leave the pew. In the purple-robed stranger he recognised his own field-labourer, Andrew Donaldson! Andrew, however, kept his seat, and looked haughty and unmoved. But the service began—the preacher looked often to the pew of the squire, and at length he too seemed to make the discovery, for he paused for a full half-minute in the middle of his sermon, gazed at the purple coat, and all the congregation gazed with him, and breaking from his subject, he commenced a lecture agninst the wickedness of pride and vanity.

The service being concluded, the sons and daughters of Andrew Donaldson proceeded home, with as many eyes fixed upon them as upon their father's purple coat. They were confounded and unhappy beyond the power of words to

picture their feelings. They communicated to their mother all that they had seen. She, good soul, was more distressed than even they were, and she sat down and wept for "her poor Andrew." He came not; and Paul, Peter, and Jacob were about to go in quest of him—and they now thought in earnest of a strait-waistcoat—when John Bell's waiter of the King's Head entered, and presenting Mr Donaldson's compliments, requested them to come and dine with him. Wife, sons, and daughters were petrified!

"Puir man!" said Mrs Donaldson, and tears forbade her to say more.

"Oh! my father! my puir father!" cried Sarah.

"He does not seem to be poor," answered the waiter.

"What in the world can hae put him sae?" said Jacob.

"We maun try to soothe and humour him," added Paul.

The whole family, therefore, though ashamed to be seen in the village, went to the King's Head together. They were ushered into a room, in the midst of which stood Andrew, with divers trunks or boxes around him. His wife screamed, as she beheld his transformation; and, clasping her hands together, she cried, "O Andrew!"

"Catherine," said he, "ye must understand that ye are a lady now, and ye must not call me Andrew, but Mister Donaldson."

"A leddy!" exclaimed she, in a tone of mingled fear and astonishment—"O dear! what does the man mean! Bairns! bairns! can nane o' ye bring yer faither to reason!"

"It is you that requires to be brought to reason, Mrs Donaldson," said he; "but now since I see that ye are all upon the rack, I'll put ye at your wits' end. I am sensible that baith you and our neighbours have always considered me in the light of a miser. But neither you nor them knew my motive for saving. It has ever been my desire to become the richest, the greatest, and the most respectable man in the parish. But, though you may think that I have

pinched the stomach, and wasted nothing on the back, this I knew I never could become out of the savings of nine shillings a-week. Yet, night and day, I hoped, prayed, and believed, that it would be accomplished—and it is accomplished!—yes, I repeat, it is accomplished."

"Oh help us!—help us?—what's to be dune wi' him?" cried Mrs Donaldson.

"Will ye speak sae that we can understand ye, faither?" said Paul.

"Well, then," replied Andrew, "for twenty years have I purchased shares in the lotteries, and twenty times did I get nothing but blanks—but I have got it at last!—I have got it at last!"

"What have you got, Andrew?" inquired Mrs Donaldson, eagerly, whose eyes were beginning to be opened.

"What have ye got, faither?" exclaimed Rebecca, breathlessly, who possessed no small portion of her father's pride; "how muckle is't?—will we can keep a coach?"

"Ay, and a coachman, too!" answered he, with an air of triumphant pride; "I have got the half of a *thirty thousand!*"

"The like o' that!" said Mrs Donaldson, raising her hands.

"A coach!" repeated Rebecca, surveying her face in a mirror.

Sarah looked surprised, but said nothing.

"Fifteen thousand pounds!" said Peter.

"Fifteen thousand!" responded Jacob.

Paul was thoughtful.

"Now," added Andrew, opening the boxes around him, "go each of you cast off the sackloth which now covers you, and in these you will find garments such as it becomes the family of Andrew Donaldson, Esquire, to wear."

They obeyed his commands; and, casting aside their home-made cloth and cotton gowns, they appeared before him in

the raiment which he had provided for them. The gowns were of silk, the coats of the finest Saxony, the waistcoats Marseilles. Mrs Donaldson's dress sat upon her awkwardly —the waist was out of its place, she seemed at a loss what to do with her arms, and altogether she appeared to feel as though the gown were too fine to sit upon. Sarah was neat, though not neater than she was in the dress of printed cotton which she had cast off; but Rebecca was transformed into the fine lady in a moment, and she tossed her head with the air of a duchess. The sleeves of Paul's coat were too short, Peter's vest would admit of but one button, and Jacob's trousers were deficient in length. Nevertheless, great was the outward change upon the family of Andrew Donaldson, and they gazed upon each other in wonder, as they would have stared at an exhibition of strange animals.

At this period there was a property, consisting of about twenty acres, in the neighbourhood of the village for sale. Mr Donaldson became the purchaser, and immediately commenced to build *Luck's Lodge, or Lottery Hall*, which today arrested your attention. As you may have seen, it was built under the direction of no architect but caprice, or a fickle and uninformed taste. The house was furnished expensively; there were card-tables and dining-tables, the couch, the sofa, and the harpsichord. Mrs Donaldson was afraid to touch the furniture, and she thought it little short of sin to sit upon the hair-bottomed mahogany chairs, which were studded with brass nails, bright as the stars in the firmament. Though, however, a harpsichord stood in the dining-room, as yet no music had issued from the lodge. Sarah had looked at it, and Rebecca had touched it, and appeared delighted with the sounds she produced; but even her mother knew that such sounds were not a tune. A dancing-master, therefore, who at that period was teaching the "five positions" to the youths and maidens of the village,

was engaged to teach dancing and the mysteries of the harpsichord at the same time to the daughters of Mr. Donaldson. He had become a great and a rich man in a day; yet the pride of his heart was not satisfied. His neighbours did not lift their hats to him, as he had expected; but they passed him, saying, "Here's a fine day, Andrew!" or, "Weel, Andrew, hoo's a' wi' ye the day?" To such observations or inquiries he never returned an answer, but with his silver-mounted cane in his hand stalked proudly on. But this was not all; for, even in passing through the village, he would hear the women remark, "There's that silly body Donaldson away past;" or, "There struts the Lottery Ticket!" These things were wormwood to his spirit, and he repented that he had built his house in a neighbourhood where he was known. To be equal with the squire, however, and to mortify his neighbours the more, he bought a pair of horses and a barouche. He was long puzzled for a crest and motto with which to emblazon it; and Mrs. Donaldson suggested that Peter should paint on it a lottery ticket, but her husband stamped his foot in anger; and at length the coach-painter furnished it with the head and paws of some unknown animal.

Paul had always been given to books; he now requested to be sent to the university. His wish was complied with, and he took his departure for Edinburgh. Peter had always evinced a talent for drawing and painting. When a boy, he was wont to sketch houses and trees with pieces of chalk, which his mother declared to be as *natural as life*, and he now took instructions from a drawing-master. Jacob was ever of an idle turn; and he at first prevailed upon his father to purchase him a riding-horse, and afterwards to furnish him with the means of seeing the world. So Jacob set up gentleman in earnest, and went abroad. Mrs Donaldson was at home in no part of the house but the kitchen; and in it, notwithstanding her husband's lectures to remember

that she was the wife of Mister Donaldson, she was generally found.

At the period when her father obtained the prize, Sarah was on the eve of being united to a respectable young man, a mechanic in the village, but now she was forbidden to speak or to look on him. The cotton gown lay lighter on her bosom than did its silken successor. Rebecca mocked her, and her father persecuted her; but poor Sarah could not cast off the affections of her heart like a worn garment. From childhood she had been blithe as the lark, but now dull melancholy claimed her as its own. The smile and the rose expired upon her cheeks together, and her health and happiness were crushed beneath her father's wealth. Rebecca, too, in their poverty had been "respected like the lave," but she now turned disdainfully from her admirer, and when he dared to accost her, she inquired with a frown, "Who are you, sir?" In her efforts also to speak properly, she committed foul murder on his Majesty's English; but she became the pride of her father's heart, his favourite daughter whom he delighted to honour.

Still feeling bitterly the want of reverence that was shown him by the villagers, and resolved at the same time to act as other gentlemen of fortune did, as winter drew on, Mr. Donaldson removed, with his wife, and daughters, and his son Peter, to London. They took up their abode at a hotel in Albemarle Street; and having brought the barouche with them, every afternoon Mr. Donaldson and his daughter Rebecca drove round the Park. His dress was rich and his carriage proud, and he lounged about the most fashionable places of resort; but he was not yet initiated into the mysteries of fashion and greatness; he was ignorant of the key by which their chambers were to be unlocked; and it mortified and surprised him that Andrew Donaldson, Esq., of Luck's Lodge—a gentleman who paid ready money for everything—received no invitations to the routes, the as-

semblies, or tables of the *haut ton*; but he paraded Bond Street, or sauntered on the Mall, with as little respect shown to him as by his neighbours in the country. When he had been a month in the metropolis, he discovered that he had made an omission, and he paid two guineas for the announcement of his arrival in a morning newspaper. "This will do!" said he twenty times during breakfast, as he held the paper in his hand, and twenty times read the announcement —"Arrived at —— Hotel, Albemarle Street, A. Donaldson, Esq., of Luck's Lodge, and family, from their seat in the north." But this did not do; he found it was two guineas thrown away, but consoled himself with the thought that it would vex the squire and the people of his native village. With the hope of becoming familiar with the leading men of the great world, he became a frequenter of the principal coffee-rooms. At one of these, he shortly became acquainted with a Captain Edwards, who, as Mr. Donaldson affirmed, was intimate with all the world, and bowed to and was known by every nobleman they met. Edwards was one of those creatures who live—heaven knows how—who are without estates and without fortune, but who appear in the resorts of fashion as its very mirrors. In a word, he was one of the hangers-on of the nobility and gentry—one of their blacklegs and purveyors. Poor Mr. Donaldson thought him the greatest man he had ever met with. He heard him accost noblemen on the streets in the *afternoon* with, "Good *morning*, my lord," and they familiarly replied, "Ha! Tom! what's the news?" He had borrowed ten, fifty, and a hundred pounds from his companion; and he had relieved him of a hundred or two more in teaching him to play at whist; but, vain, simple Mr. Donaldson never conceived that such a great man and such a fashionable man could be without money, though he could not be at the trouble to carry it. Edwards was between thirty and forty years of age, but looked younger; his hair was black,

and tortured into ringlets; his upper lip was ornamented with thin, curved moustaches; and in his dress he was an exquisite, or a buck, as they were then called, of the first water. Mr. Donaldson invited him to his hotel, where he became a daily visitor. He spoke of his uncle the bishop of such a place, and of his godfather the earl of another—of his estates in Wales, and the rich advowsons in his gift. Andrew gloried in his fortune; he was now reaching the *acmé* of his ambition; he believed there would be no difficulty in getting his friend to bestow one or more of the benefices, when vacant, upon his son Paul; and he thought of sending for Paul to leave Edinburgh, and enter himself of Cambridge. Rebecca displayed all her charms before the captain; and the captain all his attractions before her. She triumphed in a conquest; so did he. Mr. Donaldson now also began to give dinners—and to them Captain Edwards invited the Honourable This, and Sir That; but in the midst of his own feast he found himself a cipher, where he was neither looked upon nor regarded, but had to think himself honoured in honourables eating of the banquet for which he had to pay. This galled him nearly as much as the perverseness of his neighbours in the country in not lifting their hats to him; but he feared to notice it, lest by so doing he should lose the distinction of their society. From the manner in which his guests treated him, they gave him few opportunities of betraying his origin; but, indeed, though a vain, he was not an ignorant man.

While these doings were carrying on in Albemarle-street, Mrs. Donaldson was, as she herself expressed it, "uneasy as a fish taken from the water." She said "such ongoings would be her death;" and she almost wished that the lottery ticket had turned up a blank. Peter was studying the paintings in Somerset House, and taking lessons in oil-colours; Rebecca mingled with company, or flaunted with Captain Edwards; but poor Sarah drooped like a lily that ap-

pears before its time, and is bitten by the returning frost. She wasted away—she died of a withered heart

For a few weeks her death stemmed the tide of fashionable folly and extravagance; for, although vanity was the ruling passion of Andrew Donaldson, it could not altogether extinguish the parent in his heart. But his wife was inconsolable; for Sarah had been her favourite daughter, as Rebecca was his. It is a weak and a wicked thing, sir, for parents to make favourites of one child more than another—good never comes of it. Peter painted a portrait of his deceased sister from memory, and sent it to the young man to whom she was betrothed—I say betrothed, for she had said to him "*I will*," and they had broken a ring between them; each took a half of it; and, poor thing, her part of it was found on her breast, in a small bag, when she died. The captain paid his daily visits —he condoled with Rebecca—and, in a short time, she bebegan to say it was a silly thing for her sister to die; but she was a grovelling-minded girl, she had no spirit.

Soon after this, Captain Edwards, in order to cheer Mr. Donaldson, obtained for him admission to a club, where he introduced him to a needy peer, who was a sort of half-proprietor of a nomination borough, and had the sale of the representation of a thousand souls. It was called his lordship's borough. One of its seats was then vacant, and was in the market; and his lordship was in want of money. Captain Edwards whispered the matter to his friend Mr Donaldson. Now, the latter, though a vain man, and anxious to be thought a fashionable man, was also a shrewd and a calculating man. His ideas expanded—his ambition fired at the thought! He imagined he saw the words ANDREW DONALDSON, ESQ., M.P., in capitals before him. He discovered that he had always had a turn for politics—he remembered that, when a working man, he had always been too much in an argument for the *Blacknebs*. He thought

of the flaming speeches he would make in parliament—he had a habit of stamping his foot (for he thought it dignified), and he did so, and half exclaimed, "Mr. Speaker!" But he thought also of his family—he sank the idea of advowsons, and he had no doubt but he might push his son Paul forward till he saw him prime minister or lord chancellor; Peter's genius, he thought, was such as to secure his appointment to the Board of Works whenever he might apply for it; Jacob would make a secretary to a foreign ambassador; and for Rebecca he provided as a maid of honour. But, beyond all this, he perceived also that, by writing the letters M.P. after his name, he would be a greater man than the squire of his native village, and its inhabitants would then lift their hats to him when he went down to his seat; or, if they did not, he would know how to punish them. He would bring in severer bills on the game laws and against smuggling—he would chastise them with a new turnpike act.

Such were the ideas that passed rapidly through his mind, when his friend Edwards suggested the possibility of his becoming a Member of Parliament.

"And how much do ye think it would cost to obtain the seat?" inquired he, anxiously.

"Oh, only a few thousands," replied the captain.

"How many, think ye?" inquired Mr. Donaldson.

"Can't say exactly," replied the other; "but my friend Mr Borrowbridge, the solicitor, in Clement's Inn, has the management of the affair—we shall inquire at him."

So they went to the solicitor; the price agreed upon for the representation of the borough was five thousand pounds; and the money was paid.

Mr Donaldson returned to his hotel, his heart swelling within him, and cutting the figures M.P. in the air with his cane as he went along. A letter was despatched to Paul at Edinburgh, to write a speech for his father, which he might deliver on the day of his nomination.

"O father!" exclaimed Paul, as he read the letter, "much money hath made thee mad."

The speech was written, and forwarded, though reluctantly, by return of post. It was short, sententious, patriotic.

With the speech in his pocket, Mr. Donaldson, accompanied by his friend Edwards, posted down to the borough. But, to their horror, on arriving, they found that a candidate of the opposite party had dared to contest the borough with the nobleman's nominee, and had commenced his canvass the day before. But what was worse than all, they were told that he bleed freely, and his friends were distributing *gooseberries* right and left.

"What is the meaning of all this?" said Mr. Donaldson, "have I not paid for the borough, and is it not mine? I shall punish him for daring to poach upon my grounds."

And, breaking away from Captain Edwards and his friends, he hurried out in quest of the mayor, to repuest advice from him. Nor had he gone far, till, addressing a person who was employed in thatching a house—

"Holloa, friend!" cried he, "can you inform me where I shall find the right worshipful the mayor?"

"Whoy, zur!" replied the thatcher, "I be's the mayor!"*

Andrew looked at him. "Heaven help us!" thought he, "you the mayor!—you!—a thatcher!—well may I be a Member of Parliament!" But, without again addressing his worship, he hastened back to his friends; and with them he was made sensible, that, although he had given a consideration for the borough, yet, as opposition had started—as the power of the patron was not omnipotent—as the other candidate was bleeding freely—as he was keeping open houses and giving *yellow gooseberries*—there was nothing for it but that Mr. Donaldson should do the same.

"But, oh! how much will it require?" again inquired the candidate, in a tone of anxiety

* This picture also is drawn from life.

"Oh, merely a thousand or two!" again cooly rejoined Captain Edwards.

"A thousand or two!" ejeculated Mr. Donaldson, for his thousands were becoming few. But, like King Richard, he had "set his fate upon a cast," and he "would stand the hazard of the die." As to his landed qualification, if elected, the patron was to provide for that; and, after a few words from his friend Edwards, "Richard was himself again"—his fears vanished—the ocean of his ambition opened before him—he saw golden prospects for himself and for his family—he could soon, when elected, redeem a few thousands; and he bled, he opened houses, he gave gooseberries as his opponent did.

But the great, the eventful, the nomination day arrived. Mr. Donaldson—Andrew Donaldson, the labourer that was—stood forward to make his speech—the speech that his son Paul, student in the University of Edinburgh, had written. He got through the first sentence, in the tone and after the manner of the village clergyman, whom he had attended for forty years; but there he stuck fast; and of all his son Paul had written—short, sententious, patriotic as it was—he remembered not a single word. But, though gravelled from forgetfulness of his son's matter, and though he stammered, hesitated, and tried to recollect himself for a few moments, he had too high an idea of his own consequence to stand completely still. No man who has a consequential idea of his own abilities will ever positively stick in a speech. I remember an old schoolmaster of mine used to say, that a public speaker should regard his audience as so many cabbage-stocks.* But he had never been a public speaker, or he would have said no such thing, Such an advice may do very well for a precentor to a congregation; but, as regards an orator addressing a multitude, it is a dif-

* This, I believe, was the advice to his students of a late professor in the University of Edinburgh.

ferent matter. No, sir; the man who speaks in public must neither forget his audience nor overlook them; he must regard them as his *equals*, but none of them as his *superiors* in intellect; he should regard every man of them as capable of understanding and appreciating what he may say; and, in order to make himself understood, he should endeavour to bring his language and his imagery down to every capacity, rather than permit them to go on stilts or to take wings. Some silly people imagine that what they call fine language, flowery sentences, and splendid metaphors, are oratory. Stuff!—stuff! Where do you find them in the orations of the immortal orators of Greece or Rome? They used the proper language—they used effective language—

"Thoughts that breathed and words that burn'd;"

but they knew that the key of eloquence must be applied not to the head but to the heart. But, sir, I digress from the speech of Mr. Donaldson. (Pardon me—I am in the habit of illustrating to my boys, and dissertation is my fault, or rather I should say my habit.) Well, sir, as I have said, he stuck fast in the speech which his son had written; but, as I have also said, he had too high an opinion of himself to stand long without saying something. When left to himself, in what he did say, I am afraid he "betrayed his birth and breeding;" for there was loud laughter in the hall, and cries of *hear him! hear him!* But the poll commenced; the other candidate brought voters from five hundred miles' distance —from east, west, north, and south—from Scotland, Ireland and the Continent. He polled a vote at every three proclamations, when Mr. Donaldson had no more to bring forward; and on the fourteenth day he defeated him by a majority of ONE! The right worshipful thatcher declared that the election had fallen on the opposing candidate. The people also said that he had spent most money, and that it was right the election should fall on the best man. He, in

truth, had spent more in the contest than Andrew Donaldson had won by his lottery ticket. The feelings of Mr. Donaldson on the loss of his election were the agonies of extreme dispair. In the height of his misery he mentioned to his *introducer*, Captain Edwards—or rather I should call him his *traducer*—that he was a ruined man; that he had lost his all. The captain laughed and left the room. He seemed to have left the town also; for his victim did not meet with him again.

In a state bordering on frenzy, he returned to London. He reached the hotel—he rushed into the room where his wife, his son, and his daughter sat. With a confused and hurried step he paced to and fro across the floor, wringing his hands, and ever and anon exclaiming, bitterly—

"Lost Andrew Donaldson!—Ruined Andrew Donaldson!"

His son Peter, who took the matter calmly, and who believed that the extent of the loss was the loss of the election, carefully surveyed his father's attitudes and the expression of his countenance, and thought the scene before him would make an admirable subject for a picture—the piece to be entitled, "*The Unsuccessful Candidate.*" "It will help to make good his loss," thought Peter, "provided he will sit."

"Oh dearsake, Andrew! Andrew!—what is't?" cried Mrs. Donaldson.

"Lost! lost! ruined Andrew Donaldson!" replied her husband.

"Oh, where is the Captain?—where is Edwards? Why is he not here?" asked Rebecca.

"The foul fiend?" exclaimed her father.

"O Andrew, man—speak! Andrew, jewel—what is't?" added his wife; "if it be only the loss o' siller, Heaven be praised! for I've neither had peace nor comfort since ye got it."

"*Only* the loss!" cried he, turning upon her like a fury

—"only the loss!" Agony and passion stopped his utterance.

Mr Donaldson was in truth a ruined man. Of the fifteen thousand which he had obtained, not three hundred, exclusive of Lottery Hall, and the twenty acres around it, were left. His career had been a brief and a fashionable one. On the following day, his son Jacob returned from abroad. Within twelve months he had cost his father a thousand pounds; and, in exchange for the money spent, he brought home with him all the vices he had met with on his route. But I blame not Jacob: his betters, the learned and the noble, do the same. Poor fellow! he was sent upon the world with a rough garment round his shoulders, which gathered up all the dust that blew, and retained a portion of all the filth with which it came in contact; but polished substances would not adhere to it.

Captain Edwards returned no more to the hotel. He had given the last lesson to his scholar in the science of fashion; he had extorted from him the last fee he could spare. He had gauged the neck of his purse, and he forsook him—in his debt he forsook him. Poor Rebecca! day after day, she inquired after the captain—the captain! Lost, degraded, wretched Rebecca! But I will say no more of her. She became as dead while she yet lived—the confiding victim of a villain!

The barouche, the horses, the trinkets that deformed Mrs. Donaldson, with a piano that had been bought for Rebecca, were sold, and Andrew Donaldson, with his family, left London, and proceeded to Lottery Hall. But there, though he endeavoured to carry his head high, though he still walked with his silver cane, and though he was known (and he took care to make it known) that he had polled within one of being a Member of Parliament—still the squire did not acknowledge him—his old acquaintances did not lift their hats to him—but all seemed certain that he was coming

down "*by the run*" (I think that was the slang or provincial phrase they used) to his old level. They perceived that he kept no horses now, save one to work the twenty acres around the lodge; for he had ploughed up, and sown with barely, and let out as potato ground, what he at first had laid out as a park. This spoke volumes. They also saw that he had parted with his coach, that he kept but one servant, and that servant told tales in the village. He was laughed at by his neighbours and those who had been his fellow-labourers; and with a sardonic chuckle they were wont to speak of his house as "*the Member o' Parliament's.*" I have said that I would say no more of poor Rebecca; but the tongues of the women in the village dwelt also on her. She died, and in the same hour died also a new-born child of the villain Edwards.

Peter had left his father's house, and commenced the profession of an artist, in a town about twenty miles from this. Mr. Donaldson was now humbled. It was his intention, with the sorry remnant of his fortune, to take a farm for Jacob; but, oh! Jacob had bathed in a sea of vice, and the bitter waters of adversity could not wash out the pollution it had left behind it. Into his native village he carried the habits he had acquired or witnessed beneath the cerulean skies of Italy, or amidst the dark-eyed daughters of France. Shame followed his footsteps. Yea, although the squire despised Mr. Donaldson, his son, a youth of nineteen, became the boon companion of Jacob. They held midnight orgies together. Jacob initiated the squireling into the mysteries of Paris and Rome, of Naples and Munich, whither he was about to proceed. But I will not dwell upon their short career. Extravagance attended it, shame and tears followed it.

Andrew Donaldson no longer possessed the means of upholding his son in folly and wickedness. He urged him to settle in the world—to take a farm while he had the power

left of placing him in it; but Jacob's sins pursued him. He fled from his father's house, and enlisted in a marching regiment about to embark for the East Indies. No more was heard of him for many years, until a letter arrived from one of his comrades, announcing that he had fallen at Corunna.

To defray the expenses which his son Jacob had brought upon him, Mr. Donaldson had not only to part with the small remnant that was left him of his fifteen thousand, but take a heavy mortgage upon Lottery Hall. Again he was compelled to put his hand to the spade and to the plough; and his wife, deprived of her daughters, again became her own servant. Sorrow, shame, and disappointment gnawed in his heart. His garments of pride, now worn threadbare, were cut off for ever. The persecution, the mockery of his neighbours increased. They asked each other "if they had seen the Member of Parliament with the spade in his hand again?" They quoted the text, "A haughty spirit goes before a fall;" and they remembered passages of the preacher's lecture against pride and vanity on the day when Andrew appeared in his purple coat. He became a solitary man; and, on the face of this globe which we inhabit, there existed not a more miserable being than Andrew Donaldson.

Peter was generally admitted to be a young man of great talents, and bade fair to rise to eminence in his profession as an artist. There was to be an exhibition of the works of living artists in Edinburgh; and Peter went through to it, taking with him more than a dozen pictures, on all subjects and of all sizes. He had landscapes, sea pieces, historical paintings, portraits, fish, game, and compositions, the grouping of which would have done credit to a master. In size, they were from five feet square to five inches. His brother Paul, who was still at the college, and who now supported himself by private teaching, was surprised when one morning Peter arrived at his lodgings, with three cadies at his

back, bearing his load of pictures. Paul welcomed him with open arms, for he was proud of his brother; he had admired his early talents, and had heard of the progress he had made in his art. With a proud heart and a delighted eye, Peter unpacked his paintings, and placed them round the room for the inspection of his brother; and great was his brother's admiration.

"What may be their value, Peter?" inquired Paul.

"Between ourselves, Paul," replied Peter, "I would not part with the lot under a thousand guineas."

"A thousand guineas!" ejeculated the student, in surprise; "do you say so?"

"Yes, I say it," answered the painter, with importance. "Look ye, Paul—observe this bridal party at the alter—see the blush on the bride's cheek, the joy in the bridegroom's eye—is it not natural? And look at the grouping! observe the warmth of the colouring, the breadth of effect, the depth of shade, the freedom of touch! Now, tell me candidly, as a brother, is it not a gem?"

"It is certainly beautiful," answered Paul.

"I tell you what," continued the artist—"though I say it who should not say it—I have seen worse things sold for a thousand guineas."

"You don't say so!" responded the astonished student, and he wished that he had been an artist instead of a scholar.

"I do," added Peter; "and now, Paul, what do you think I intend to do with the money which this will bring?"

"How should I know, brother?" returned the other.

"Why, then," said he, "I'm resolved to pay off the mortgage on our father's property, that the old man may spend the remainder of his days in comfort."

Paul wept, and taking his brother's hand, said, "And if you do, the property shall be yours, Peter."

"Never, brother!" replied the other—"rather than rob you of your birth-right I would cut my hand off."

The pictures were again packed up, and the brothers went out in quest of the secretary to the exhibition, in order to have them submitted to the committee for admission. The secretary received them with politeness; he said he was afraid that they could not find room for so many pieces as Mr Donaldson mentioned, for they wished to give every one a fair chance; but he desired him to forward the pictures, and he would see what could be done for them. The paintings were sent, and Peter heard no more of them for a week, when a printed catalogue and perpetual ticket were sent to him, with the secretary's compliments. Peter's eyes ran over the catalogue—at length they fell upon "*No.* 210. *A Bridal Party—P. Donaldson,*" and again, "*No.* 230. *Dead Game—P. Donaldson;*" but his name did not again occur in the whole catalogue. This was a disappointment; but it was some consolation that his favourite piece had been chosen.

Next day the exhibition opened, and Peter and Paul visited it together. The *Bridal Party* was a small picture with a modest frame, and they anxiously sought round the room in which it was said to be placed; but they saw it not. At length, "Here it is," said Paul—and there indeed it was, thrust into a dark corner of the room, the frame touching the floor, literally crushed and overshadowed beneath a glaring battle piece, six feet in length, and with a frame seven inches in depth. It was impossible to examine it without going upon your knees. Peter's indignation knew no bounds. He would have torn the picture from its hiding-place, but Paul prevented him. They next looked for No. 230: and, to increase the indignation of the artist, it, with twenty others, was huddled into the passage, where, as Milton saith, there

"No light, but rather darkness visible;"

or, as Spenser hath it—

"A little gloomy light, much like a shade."

For fourteen days did Peter visit the exhibition, and return to the lodgings of his brother, sorrowful and disappointed. The magical word SOLD was not yet attached to the painting which was to redeem his father's property.

One evening, Paul being engaged with his pupils, the artist had gone into a tavern, to drown the bitterness of his disappointment for a few moments with a bottle of ale. The keenness of his feelings had rendered him oblivious; and in his abstraction and misery he had spoken aloud of his favourite painting, the *Bridal Party.* Two young *gentlemen* sat in the next box; they either were not in the room when he entered, or he did not observe them. They overheard the monologue to which the artist had unconsciously given utterance, and it struck them as a prime jest to lark with his misery. The words "Splendid piece, yon *Bridal Party!*"—"Beautiful!"—"Production of a master!"—"Wonderful that it *sold* in such a bad light and shameful situation!" fell upon Peter's ears. He started up—he hurried round the box where they sat—

"Gentlemen," he exclaimed, eagerly, "do you speak of the painting No. 210 in the exhibition?"

"Of the same, sir," was the reply.

"I am the artist—I painted it," cried Peter.

"You, sir—you!" cried both the gentlemen at once. "Give us your hand, sir; we are proud of having the honour of seeing you."

"Yes, sir," returned one of them; "we left the exhibition to-day just before it closed, and had the pleasure of seeing the porter attach the ticket to it."

"Glorious!—joy! joy!" cried Peter, running in ecstasy to the bell, and ringing it violently; and, as the waiter entered, he added, "A bottle of claret! claret, boy!—claret!" And he sat down to treat the gentlemen who had announced to him the glad tidings. They drank long and deep, till Peter's head came in contact with the table, and sleep sealed

up his eyelids. When aroused by the landlord, who presented his bill, his companions were gone; and, stupid as Peter was, he recollected for the first time that his pocket did not contain funds to discharge the reckoning; and he left his watch with the tavern-keeper, promising to redeem it the next day, when he received the price of his picture. I need not tell you what a miserable day that next day was to him, when, with his head aching with the fumes of the wine, he found that he had been duped—that his picture was not sold. The exhibition closed for the season; he had spent his last shilling—and Paul was as poor as Peter: but the former borrowed a guinea, to pay his brother's fare on the outside of the coach to ——.

Andrew Donaldson continued to struggle hard; but, struggle as he would, he could not pay the interest of the mortgage. Disappointment, sorrow, humbled vanity, and the laugh of the world, were too much for him; and, shortly after Peter's visit to Edinburgh, he died, repenting that he had ever pursued the phantom Fashion, or sought after the rottenness of wealth.

"And what," inquired I, "became of Mrs Donaldson, and her sons Paul and Peter?"

"Peter, sir," continued the narrator, "rose to eminence in his profession; and, redeeming the mortgage on Lottery Hall, he gave it as a present to his brother Paul, who opened it as an establishment for young gentlemen. His mother resides with him; and, sir, Paul hath spoken unto you—he hath given you the history of Lottery Hall.

THE DOMINIE AND THE SOUTER.

THE DOMINIE'S COURTSHIP.

"WEEL, I dinna ken how it is, Richard," said a Selkirk dominie to his friend Richard Blackwell, a souter of the same royal borough—"I dinna ken how it is, but there's naething pleases me mair than some o' them Border Tales—they're so uncommonly natural. I've often thought, indeed, in my ain mind, that the writers must get silly, stupid folk to sit doun and repeat their little histories to them in their ain language; for I can hardly believe that such true delineations o' character, and such remarkable instances o' the ups and downs o' human affairs, are mere inventions. Frequently, when I finish a tale, I exclaim, 'I ken the man that's meant for;' and for a that, though the picture may be as like him as your ain face to its reflection in a looking-glass, it's ten to ane if the author is aware o' such a character being in existence. This is what puzzles me, Richard. The 'Henpecked Man,' for instance, was a *dead hit;* but unfortunately every village on the Borders claimed the bickermaker as well as Birgham; while ilk guidwife might hae been heard bawling to her next-door neighbour, as she shook the tale in her clenched hand, 'Filthy fallow! that's our John or your Ned he's been taking aff.'"

"It wadna be worth their while putting ony o' us twa into prent," rejoined the souter.

"I differ with you there, neighbour," replied the dominie; "for there is no calculating the value that clever and skilly hands can give to rude materials. Would ye believe, now, to use a funny illustration, that a farthing's worth o' pig-iron, made into steel chains, rises to mair than twa hun-

dred times its value? Ye stare incredulously, Richard; but it's the truth I'm telling you;—so it follows that out o' the raw material o' our lives, value o' anither kind may be gotten by a proper adaptation o' incidents and the like: and it often occurs to me, there is that about my courtship that would make no that ill a story, were it a wee thocht embellished. Ye shall hear it, however, as it is, and judge for yoursel:"—

Love, ye must be informed, Richard, did not communicate itself to my heart till I was well up in years—probably when I was seven-and-twenty, or thereabouts—nor did it blaze up a' at once, like a sudden flame—for it seemed at first but a sma' sma' spark, which often threatened to go out o' its ain accord, like coals kindled with green sticks—till Margery Johnson—that's my wife's maiden name—would have come across my path again like a bonny blink o' sunshine, and presently the dying embers would grow het once more at the heart, and burn away for a' the world like a blown-up fire. Now, though Margery, when I went a-courting her, didna possess ony great personal attractions to make a sang about—like the feck o' your grand romance leddies—yet she had that life and buoyancy about her, and blowsy healthiness o' countenance, which can make a deeper impression on the heart, at least, according to my liking, than a' the fine complexions, blue een, and artificial forms in the world. Margery was a little above the middle height—a plump, robust, guid-looking lass—the apple o' her faither's eye, and the pride o' her mother—whom everybody spoke well o'. And it was not without either choice or reflection that my passion for Margery Johnson was imbibed. Her faither, who is as guid a man as ever broke the world's bread, attended the Rev. Mr Heslop as weel as mysel; and as the seat which I occupied gave me a full command o' him and his family—for they only sat about an arm's-length from me—I had the pleasure o' seeing Margery, with the

lave, every returning Sabbath. I dinna ken rightly how it was, but when she slipped along the aisle, I felt like a shortness o' breath, and a queer tingling sensation steal owre my whole body. In the time o' the singing, too, I could not help from keeking off the psalm-book, had it been to save me, to see if she were looking at me; and when our glances happened to encounter, I would have instantly reddened to the bottom o' the haffets, and impudently pretended, by casting my eyes carelessly up to the big front window, that it was merely a casual contact. I cannot take upon me to say how far this was sinful; but I ken that at such times I sat in a sort o' religious fervour, on terms o' kindness with my bitterest enemy—for weel can love teach a moral to the mind—while my heart seemed rinning owre with gratitude to the Deity for this new proof o' his benevolence and goodness, in the provision made for puir erring mankind.

I'm no sure whether I have mentioned that Margery was in the service o' the minister—if no, ye must understand that she was his housemaid; and the manse, ye may weel conceive, Richard, was not the best place in the world for carrying on a courtship. I happened to be muckle thought on, however, by the minister and his wife—for my learning, ye see, brought me within a very little o' the minister himsel—indeed, we were nearly a buckle; and I, accordingly, had frequent invitations from him on a week-day night, to drink tea and spend the evening. On those occasions, unfortunately, I only saw Margery when she brought in and carried out the tea things; but one night, when the minister and I were indulging ourselves after the four-hours was owre (I may mention, for your edification, Richard, that *four-hours* signifies the time o' drinking tea—*four*, according to Watson, being the ancient *hour* for the afternoon beverage)—it was after our tea was done, as I was saying, that the minister and I sat down to a glass o' whisky-toddy;

and, as we both got very cracky, the minister says to me, jocularly, for he was a pleasant, agreeable man, Mr Heslop—

"I wonder, James, ye never think o' changing your life!"

Now, it did not just strike me, at first, what he meant; so I bluntly replied, "Yes, sir; I am weel aware, as the heathen philosopher has beautifully observed, *Proba vita est via in cœlum*—which signifies, A good life is the way to heaven."

With that the minister and his wife kinked and laughed a guid ane; and the latter at last cried out to me—

"Mr Heslop means, James, that you should get married."

"Oh, is that what he's driving at?" says I, colouring at my ain want o' gumption—"truly it's no a slight matter to get married, though I'll no be after denying that, could I fall in with a likely, serious young woman, I should have no great objections to make her my wife."

"What think you o' Margery, my housemaid?" says Mrs Heslop, archly—"I think she would make you a guid wife."

Had I been convicted o' the theft o' a silver spoon, I could not have felt more confused than I did at this moment—I found the very perspiration, Richard, oozing out in large drops from every pore o' my frame; while Mr Heslop, in the midst o' my embarrassment, chimed in—

"You forget, dear, that James must have a learned lady—one who has attained the *tongues*.—What say you, Mr Brown, to a *bluestocking?*"

"White lamb's-wool, sir, or blue jacey, are both alike to me," says I, laughing at his drollery. "I'm no particular to a shade."

Another loud laugh from the minister and his wife followed up this sally, and, at the same minute, the parlour-door opened, and in capered Margery, with an ash-bucketful o' coals, to mend the fire. Mrs Heslop, at the same time, went out, and left the minister and me owre our second tumbler. I thought I never saw Margery look half so in-

teresting as she did that night; and I was so passionately struck with her appearance, that, without minding the presence o' the minister, I leaned back on my chair, and, taking the glass o' spirits into my hand, and looking owre my left shouther—

"My service to you, Margery," says I, and drank it off.

"I daresay the man's gyte!" says Margery, staring me in the face like an idiot, as she gaed tittering out o' the room.

I was not to be beaten in any such way, however; and on the afternoon o' the following Sabbath, I contrived, when the kirk scaled, to get into the loaning before Margery, and sauntering till her and her neighbour overtook me, I turned round just as they were passing my side, and, says I, keeping up with them at the same time—

"Here's a braw afternoon, lassies."

"It's a' that," says her neighbour.

Now, had it been to crown me King o' England, I did not ken what next to say, for I felt as if I had been suddenly tongue-tacked; and, without the word o' a lee, Richard, I'm certain we walked as guid as two hundred yards without uttering another syllable.

"How terrible warm it is!" says I, at last, removing my hat, and wiping the perspiration from my brow with my India silk napkin.

"So I think," says Margery, jeeringly. And the next minute she and her neighbour doubled the corner o' the loaning, and struck into the path which led down to the minister's, without so muckle as saying, "Guid e'en to ye, sir!"

I made the best o' my way back through droves o' the kirk folk, who kept speering at one another as I passed, quite loud enough for me to hear them—

"There now, what a world this is!—isna that the light-headed dominie? Whar can he hae been stravagin on

the Lord's-day afternoon? He can hae been after nae guid."

This, as ye may weel suppose, was but a puir beginning, Richard; but still I was determined to hold out and persevere. My next step was to mool in with Margery's faither; and, as I knew him to be a great snuffer, I bought a box and got it filled, though I did not care a button-tap for the snuff mysel, which I used to rax owre to him during the sermon. Nor did I forget her mother—for it's an important thing in courting, Richard, to gain owre the auld folk—but day after day I used to strip my coat-breast o' the bit "mint" and "southernwood" that I was in the habit o' sticking in my button-hole on a Sabbath-day, and present them to her, to keep her up in the afternoon service, when the heat was like to overcome her. I invited Margery's brother, too, twice or thrice, on a Sunday afternoon, to his tea; and contrived, in seeing him home, to walk aye within a stone's-cast o' his faither's house, when he could not for mense's sake but ask me in. On such occasions, the auld man and I used to yoke about religion, and my clever knack in conversation and argument did not fail to impress him with a high sense o' my abilities. Margery's mother was equally taken with my particular mode o' expression—for schulemaisters, Richard, have to watch owre the smallest *particle;* and frequently when I have delivered mysel o' a few long-nebbed words, she would have slapped me on the shoulder, and cried out—

"It's worth a body's while listening to the likes o' you, Maister Brown; for to hear ye speak is like hearing a Latin scholar reading aloud frae a prented book—such braw words, truly, are no found in every head; and the mair's the pity that your ain is no waggin in a pulpit. Now, what would I no gie, could ony o' mine acquit themselves in such a manner."

This pleasant intercourse went on for some time, till, one

everyday night, being down at tea with Margery's brother, her mother says—meaning, no doubt, for me to take the hint—

"Ye mustna sit there, Robert"—that was to her son—"for ye ken your sister is down at Greystone Mill, and has to come hame hersel the night, which is far frae being chancy, seeing that there are sae mony o' thae Irish fallows upon the road."

"I will take a step doun," says I; "it will be a pleasant walk."

"That wad be such a thing!" says the auld woman, "and *him* sitting there! Now, I'm vexed at mysel for having mooted it before ye."

"I feel a pleasure," says I, "in going; and it's o' no use Robert tiring himsel, as he was thrashing aneugh through the day."

"But ye're sae kind and considerate, Maister Brown," says she—"it's just imposing on your guid nature athegither. Hurry her hame, sir, if ye please, afore the darkening; but, to be sure, we needna fret, kenning she's in such excellent company."

I accordingly set off for the Greystone Mill; and when I came in front o' the premises, I began to see that it was rather an awkward business I was out on; for I didna ken but Margery might hae somebody o' her ain to see her hame; and to go straight up to an unco house, and speer for a female that I had only spoken twice till, and that in a dry "how-do-ye-do" kind o' manner, was rather a trying affair, Richard, for one that was naturally bashful, as ye may weel conceive. Into the house I went, however, and meeting auld *mooter-the-melder* in the entry—

"How's a' wi' ye, freend?" says I, in guid braid Scotch, shooting out my hand, at the same time, to give him a hearty shake.

"Ye hae the advantage o' me," says he, drawing back

and puckering up his mealy mouth. "I dinna ken ye."

"I'm the schulemaister o' Selkirk," says I.

"And what may the schulemaister o' Selkirk be wanting wi' me?" says he, gruffly, still keeping me standing like a borrowed body in the passage.

"I'm seeking a young woman," says I.

"Oh," says he, "ye'll be Margery Johnson's sweetheart, Ise warrant—come awa ben."

"He's no my sweetheart," says Margery, as I was stalking into the bit parlour. "I wonder what's brought the randering *fool* here."

This, I confess, was rather a damper; and had I not been weel versed in a woman's pawky ways, and kent that she was aye readiest to misca' them for whom she had the greatest regard, before folk, I'm not so sure, Richard, what might have been the upshot. I sat doun, however, as if I had not overheard her, and chatted awa to the miller's twa gaucy daughters, keeping a watchful eye on Margery a' the time, who did not seem to relish owre weel the attention I was bestowing on them. I saw plainly, indeed, that she was a little mortified, for she gaunted twice or thrice in the midst o' our pleasantry—no forgetting to put her hand before her mouth, and cast her eyes up to the watch that stood on the mantelpiece, as muckle as to say—"It's time we were stepping, lad." I kept teasing her, nevertheless, for a guid bit; and when at last we left the mill, and got on to the road that leads down to the Linthaughs, I says to her, "Will ye tak my arm, Margery dear?"

"Keep your arms," says she, "for them ye mak love till."

"That's to you, then," says I.

"Ye never made love to me in your life," says she.

"Then I must not ken how to mak it," says I; "but aiblins ye'll teach me."

"Schulemaisters dinna need to be taught," says she; "ye ken nicelies how to mak love to Betty Aitchison—at least to her siller."

This was the miller's youngest daughter.—"What feck o' siller has Betty?" says I.

"Ye can gang and ask her," says she.

"Hoot, what serves a' this cangling?" says I, taking hold o' her arm, and slipping it into mine—"you are as het in the temper as a jenny-nettle, woman."

"Ye're the first that said it," says she.

"And I hope I'll be the last," says I. And on we joggit, as loving-like as if we had been returning from the kirk on our bridal.

It might be four weeks after this meeting, that Margery and I were out, on an autumn evening, in the lang green loaning that leads down to the Linthaughs. It was as bonny a night as man could be abroad in: the moon, nearly full, was just rising owre the Black Cairn, and the deep stillness that prevailed was only broken by the low monotonous murmur o' the trees, or interrupted by our own footsteps. I dinna ken how long we might have sauntered in the loaning —aiblins, two hours—and though inclined a' the time to confess to Margery that I loved her, I could not bring mysel to out with it, for aye as I was about to attempt it, I felt as if something were threatening to choke me. At last I thought on an expedient. And what was it, think ye? No —you'll not guess, Richard; but you'll laugh when you hear. I had recently got by heart the affecting ballad that had been written by a freend o' my ain, on Willie Grahame and Jeanie Sanderson o' Cavers, a little before Jeanie's death; and, thinks I—as I was a capital hand at the Scotch—Ise try what effect the reciting o' it will have upon Margery; for wha kens but it may move her heart to love and pity? This scheme being formed, I says to her—

"Margery, did you ever hear the waesome ballad about Jeanie Sanderson and her sweetheart?"

"Where was I to hear it?" says she.

"Would ye like to hear it?" says I.

"I'm no caring," says she.

And wi' that I began the ditty; but, as it has never been in prent, I had better rin owre it, that you may be able to judge o' its fitness for accomplishing my *end*. It begins as if Jeanie—who was dying o' consumption—were addressing hersel to Willie Grahame, and he to her—*vice versâ*.

SCOTTISH BALLAD.

"Six years have come and gane, Willie,
  Since first I met with you;
And through each chequer'd scene I've been
  Affectionate and true.
But now my yearning heart must a'
  Its cherish'd hopes resign;
For never on this side the grave
  Can my true love be mine."

"Oh, do not speak o' death, Jeanie,
  Unless that ye would break
The heart that cheerfully would shed
  Its life's-blood for your sake;—
For what a dreary blank this world
  Would prove to me, I trow,
If ye were sleeping your long sleep
  Upon yon cauld green knowe!"

"When I have pass'd from earth, Willie,
  E'en sorrow as you will,
Your stricken heart will pleasure seek
  In other objects still.
For though, when my worn frame is cauld,
  Your grief may be profound,
My very name will soon become
  Like a forgotten sound!"

"I'm wae to see the cheek, Jeanie,
  That shamed the elder wine,

Now stripp'd o' a' the bloom that told
  Your heart's fond love langsyne.
But do not, Jeanie Sanderson,
  Come owre your death to me:
It's pain enow to see you look
  So sad on a' you see."

"I'm dying on my feet, Willie,
  Whate'er you'd have me say;
And my last hour on earth, I feel,
  Draws nearer every day.
Nor can ye with false hopes deceive;
  For ne'er can summer's heat
Restore the early blighted flower
  That's crush'd aneath your feet."

"Oh, bring once more to mind, Jeanie,
  The happiness we've seen,
When at the gloaming's tranquil fa'
  We sought the loaning green.
Ye ken how oft I came when ye
  Sat eerie, love, at hame,
And tapp'd at that bit lattice, whiles—
  Your ain true Willie Grahame!"

"It's like a vanish'd dream, Willie,
  The memory o' the past,
And oft I've thought our happiness
  Owre great at times to last.
Alas! your coming now I watch
  In sickness and in pain;
But will ye seek my mother's door
  When once that I am gane?"

"You're harbouring thoughts o' me, Jeanie,
  It's wrong for you to breathe;
For oh, is wretchedness the gift
  To *me* ye would bequeath?
I've ne'er through life loved ane but you;
  And must the hopes o' years
Be rooted from my heart at once,
  And quench'd in bitter tears?"

"Ye stand 'tween me and heaven, Willie,
  Yet, oh, I do not blame,
Nor seek to wound the feeling heart,
  Whose love was aye the same.
But love is selfish to the last,
  And I should like to wear
The locket round my neck, when gane,
  That holds my Willie's hair!"

"It cuts me to the heart, Jeanie,
  To see you thus give way
To trouble ye are forcing on,
  For a' your freends can say.
And do ye think that I could e'er
  To others passion vow,
Were death to break the link that binds
  Our hearts so closely now?"

"It may be that long time, Willie,
  Will teach you to forget,
Nor leave within your breast—for me—
  One feeling o' regret.
But, should you fold another's heart
  To yours with fond regard,
Oh, think on her who then shall lie
  Happ'd up in yon kirkyard!"

Weel, a' the time I was repeating the ballad, I saw, in the changing expression o' Margery's countenance, that there was a tender struggle going on in her heart; but when I came to the last verse, she could restrain her feelings no longer, but grat outright, as if Jeanie had been her ain sister. I was rather on, Richard, for the greeting mysel; but, affecting an indifference I did not feel, I says to her, as she was in the act o' wiping her eyes wi' her pocket-napkin—

"Would ye greet for me, Margery, were I dying?"

"You're very like a dying person, or you're naething," says she.

"There are few lovers to be met wi'," says I, "like

Willie Grahame and Jeanie Sanderson—their devotedness is rare."

"Ye'll be judging frae yersel, Ise warrant," says Margery.

"Oh," says I, "I do not doubt but I could mak as guid a sweetheart as Willie Grahame, would onybody try me. But I've a secret to tell ye, woman," continued I, summoning up courage to mak a confession.

"Women canna keep secrets," says she; "so ye had better no trust me wi' it."

A long silence was the upshot o' this, and we sauntered on, as if we had been two walking statues, till we came within sight o' the manse. Margery could not but notice my perplexity; for I looked round and round about me a thousand times, for fear o' listeners, and hemmed again and again, as the words mounted to my lips, and swooned away in a burning blush on my face.

"What was it ye were gaun to tell me?" at last says she. "It maun be some great secret, surely, that ye're in such terror to disclose it."

"Weel, Margery," says I, in the greatest fervour, locking her hand passionately in baith o' mine—"if ye will have it —I LOVE YOU!"

"Is that a'?" says she, coolly slipping awa her hand. "I really thought, from seeing sae muckle dumb-show, that ye had something o' importance to tell me."

"Might I ask, if ye like *me?*" says I to her, earnestly.

"Were it even possible that I did," says she, "do ye think that I wad be sic a born fool as to tell ye?—*Atweel do I no!*"

I had often heard, Richard, o' folk being dumbfoundered; but, till that moment, I never knew what it was to be so mysel; and such was the keen sense o' my silliness, that I even wished I might sink down through the earth, clean out o' sight and hearing. As matters stood, however, I saw

there was naething for it but urging Margery to discretion; so I says till her, seriously—

"I hope in heaven, Margery, that neither your partner nor anybody else will be the better o' what has passed between you and me this night!"

"What do you mean?" says she.

"Why," says I, "I mean, that ye'll no acquaint them wi' my liking for you."

"Guid truly," says she, wi' a toss o' her head, "I wad hae muckle to speak aboot! To tell ye the truth, lad, I never was thinking ony mair aboot it, nor wad it hae entered into my head again, had ye no mentioned it."

"I do not care," says I, rather wittily, "how seldom it enter your *head*, Margery, so long as it engage your *heart*."

"Ye're a queer man," says she, "to be a schulemaister;" and skipped aff to the manse, without expressing the least desire to see me again.

When I went home and lay down in bed that night, I could do nothing but toss and tumble; and aye as my silliness recurred to me, I would have uttered a loud *hem*, as a person will do when he is clearing his throat, to keep the racking thought down; but, in spite o' a' I could do, it continued uppermost, and kept torturing me till better than half-past four in the morning. Weel, thinks I, this is really a fine pass I've brought mysel to! I'll not only become the laughingstock o' the minister and his wife, but the whole town will join in with ready chorus. Time slipped on, however, and things remained much the same, save that Margery took upon hersel a great many airs, and behaved on a' occasions as if I were her humble servant. At last, Richard, I took heart o' grace, plucked up a spirit, and seemed careless about *her*. That Margery was secretly piqued at this, I had ample proof; for, meeting William Aitchison one night at her father's—for she had then left

the minister's service—to mortify me, the puir creature paid the most marked attention to the young man, scarcely goaming me; but, for a' that, I could see plainly aneugh that she preferred me in her heart, though her pride would not let her show it. Nor did she stop here; for, when Aitchison rose to go away, she hurried to the press, and taking out a bottle o' spirits, she poured him out a dram, which he no sooner had swallowed, than she put away the bottle and the glass, without so muckle as saying, "Colly, will ye taste?" But I saw through a' this, Richard; and, though she went to the door and laughed and chatted with him, I knew brawlies, from her very manner, that she was acting, and would have gien the best thing in a' the house, to have been freends with me again. At last, into the room she comes, and sets hersel doun by the fire, with her hands owre ilk other. Now, thinks I, I'll pay ye back in your ain coin, lass; so I rattled away with her brother, for as guid as half-an-hour, about the qualities o' bone-dust and marl, never letting on that I saw her a' the time, until happening to pat the auld colly that lay sound asleep on the hearthstane, the puir creature, vexed at the thought o' the dumb beast getting that attention paid him which was denied to hersel, kicked him ill-naturedly with her foot, and ordered him out o' the room.

"I thought lassies were aye best-natured when they had seen their jo and dearie," says I, giving her brother a sly dunch with my arm, and looking slily up in Margery's face.

"She's in the sulks, the jade," says her mother; "and if she doesna keep a better temper, the worst will be her ain—that's a' that I'll say."

Margery made no reply to this; but taking the candlestick into her hand that stood on the table, left the parlour without uttering a word.

"What's the matter wi' ye and her now, James?" says the auld wife—for she did not mind styling me *Maister*, as

we were so very familiar, though I must say that Margery's faither continued to the last to *Maister* me—he had such a regard for mysel, and veneration for the profession.

"There is naething the matter with us," says I—"that I ken o', at least."

"Come, come, lad; ye maunna tell me that," says she; "it's no little that will ding my lass; and if ye hae slighted her for ony o' the Aitchisons, it says unco little for you, wi' a' your learning. Oh, shame fa' that weary, weary siller!" added she, shaking her head, and leaving the room; "it's been the bane o' true love sin the world had a beginning, and will, I think, till it have an end."

On my road home that night I resolved in my mind to trifle no longer with Margery; for I became convinced it was but heartless conduct, to say the very least o't. To get her to confess, however, that she loved me, I was resolutely determined on; and, after devising a thousand schemes, I at last thought o' trying what effect my way-going would have upon her. Accordingly, as ye may weel remember, Richard, I got a report circulated that I had an intention o' going out to America, to try my luck in the other world; so, meeting with Margery one night between the Rankleburn and her ain house, I asked her if she had any objections to take a walk with me as far as the Linthaughs.

"What are ye gaun to do at the Linthaughs?"

"Do ye not know," says I, "that I'm about to leave this quarter, for guid and a', for America?" Her heart lap into her mouth at hearing this, and she quickly cast her eyes round on me, which were brimful o' tears, as if to see whether or no I spoke in earnest, and hurriedly withdrew them the same moment without uttering a word. "It's a trying thing," says I, "to leave the place o' ane's nativity. It may appear childish, but there is a charm attaches even to the schulehouse, with its clay floor, and dirty hacked tables, that my heart cannot resist; and, as sure as death, Margery,

the very wooden chair, whose hind legs I rock backwards and forwards on when the class is ranged before me, dimmed my eyes with tears this morning, when I reflected that, in a few weeks, some stranger lad should sit upon it. It was but the other night, too, that I chanced to light upon a few simple verses in Mrs Heslop's album that quite unmanned me."

"What were they about?" says Margery.

"Just about a person's way-going and fareweel-taking," says I; "and the writer, in speaking o' the sorrow it occasioned him, to take a last look o' ony familiar object, says, truly and feelingly—

'I never look'd a last adieu
To things familiar, but my heart
Shrank with a feeling, almost pain,
Even from their lifelessness to part.

I never spoke the word Farewell!
But with an utterance faint and broken;
A heart-sick yearning for the time
When it should never more be spoken.'

"God only knows," continued I, in the same deep earnestness, "whether the time will ever come round to *me* when the bitter word shall never be spoken again. Our evening walks, Margery, will soon be at an end; but go where I will, never can I forget the green banks o' the Yarrow, and the beetling brow o' those hills, with their red heather and bleached bent, where I used to rin when a callant; and no scene, however grand or lovely, can ever have nearer and warmer claims upon my affection, than this loaning, Margery, where you and I have watched the lang streaks o' the yellow sunlight fading in the grey clouds o' evening, as the twilight thickened round us, rendering us as happy as if we were under the delusion o' glamoury. In the sad clearness o' regret, the whole o' the simple images o' the past are crowding owre my fancy; and now that I am thinking

o' leaving Selkirk, I cannot describe to you the melancholy sensation o' loneliness that possesses me. I depart from it a green bough, and can only return—if ever I be permitted to come back—a withered, sapless stem; and, though the sun may shine, the birds sing, and that bonny green haugh present the same garniture o' sweets and beauties as ever, what will it a' avail, Margery, if *you*, and a' them that I care for, have gone down into the grave, and left me without a tie to bind me to the world!"

Here the tears actually trickled down my cheeks, Richard, having wrought my feelings into such a fermentation; and Margery, the same moment, threw her arms around me, and breathed on my neck, in a tremulous and broken voice, the love o' her warm and feeling heart.

"Will ye cross the Atlantic with me, Margery?" says I, while the dear creature still trembled palpably by my side.

"Yes, yes," says she, tenderly; "but ye're no gaun to leave Selkirk, James; and ye ken ye're only saying sae to try me."

"You and my happiness are so utterly entwined, Margery," says I, "that I could not for a moment harbour the thought, were it to make you uneasy. *I'll no stir a foot.*"

About two months after this took place, Margery and I were married by Mr Heslop, our ain minister; and a braw wedding we had, there being no less than eight couple, besides my guidfather, at it. And, certies, she could not complain o' her down-sitting; for, though I say it who should not, I do not believe there's a brawer house than ours—among those o' our ain graith, I mean—in a' Selkirk, or one where you'll find half o' the comfort; for Margery and I are as happy as the day is long, and our twa bonny bairns, John and Mary—the laddie's christened after my faither, and the lassie after the wife's mother—mingle with us nightly around our cheerful fireside in the snug little parlour, delighting us with their endearing prattle,

and beguiling our cares with the innocent joyousness o' their happy hearts. You may think me a weak man, Richard; but I doubt not the most feck o' parents are like mysel—fond o' speaking about their offspring—no minding that it may be tiresome aneugh to those that never had ony themselves; yet could we but feel how the sunshine o' their young and glad hearts reflects itself back upon a doting faither's, I am certain ye would think that I was more to be envied in my domestic happiness than the monarch o' England; and weel can I exclaim, in the words o' the Scottish sang—

> "I view, with mair than kingly pride,
> My hearth—a heaven o' rapture;
> While Mary's hand in mine will slide,
> As Jockie reads his chapter."

THE SOUTER'S WEDDING.

"Not to flatter you, Maister Brown," said the souter, when the dominie had finished the account of his courtship, "your wooing is a capital tale in itself; and could it only be put into prent, in the simple and honest manner—for ye hide nothing—that you've gone owre it, I'll venture to say that a more laughable story is no in the book. Deil o' the like o' it I ever heard; so muckle duplicity on the one hand, and sheepishness on the other; and, after a', to think that ye should have won your wife's heart by such a wily stratagem. Ye talked, if I remember rightly, o' being weel up in years ere ye fell in love; but atweel I cannot say the same, for I was owre head and ears in it before I was rightly into my teens. Having my faither's business in Selkirk to fall back upon, and being rather handsome, and no that ill-farand, and naturally gifted, like the rest o' our family—for our cleverness a' came by the Maxwells—that's our mother's side o' the house—it is not to be wondered at

that the young lassies o' the place should have held a great racket about me. I was even styled the leddies' man; and, night after night, I might have been seen strolling away down by the Pleasance, in company with the Jacksons—high as they hold their heads above you and me now, Maister Brown; and, at other times, with the braw niece o' the dean o' guild. At our annual fairs, too, I have seen the genteeler lasses—farmers' daughters and the like—flocking about me for their *fairing* in perfect droves; and I'm certain there was not one o' them, either from Selkirkshire or Roxburghshire, but who would have waded the Tweed for me, had I but held up my thumb. I was very ill to please, however; for, unless I could get one possessed o' youth, beauty, and siller, I had resolved never to marry. These three requisites I considered indispensable in a wife; and though, at times, I felt my prudent resolution nearly sapped by the winning gentleness o' Susan Baillie, I still prevented the sacred citadel o' my heart from being openly taken, and kept cautiously speculating upon the untoward consequences o' a rash and imprudent marriage. My faither dropping off just as I was entering upon my three-and-twentieth year, his business was consigned owre to me, with the whole o' his effects; and, although the heavy bereavement did not fail to make a suitable impression upon my heart, I felt my personal consequence greatly increased, from the circumstance o' standing in his *shoon*. The Johnsons went actually mad about me, besides scores o' others, as weel to do in the world as any Johnson among them; and many a trap was set for me, by auld crones who had daughters at a marriageable age hanging on their hands. I continued, however, to gallant away among them, as a kind o' general lover; and at a' their select parties, there was I to be found figuring.

Thus weeks, and months, and years passed on, and I still remained in single blessedness, while the young leddies o' my acquaintance kept stepping off one by one—some marrying

tradesmen's sons, and others the young gentlemen belonging to the neighbouring counties, till not one o' a' the number that I used to caper about with was left for my taking. The very bairns o' some o' them, breeched and unbreeched, were big aneugh to come to my shop and get the measure o' their shoon; and on one occasion, when Susan Baillie's auld Irish nurse—Susan was then Mrs Captain Fraser—brought down the auldest lassie in her hand, to get a pair o' red boots fitted on, I declare the very tears came into my eyes when I saw the little creature—she looked so like her mother!

"Losh, me!" says I to Peggy Byrne, "that lassie makes me an auld man."

"Och, and it's your own fault, Master Blackwell," says the nurse, "that your ould at all at all; for you, who are a gintleman born, should be glad to have the mistress and purty childer at home, even to spake to."

"A wife is an expensive piece o' furniture to keep about a house," says I.

"I'm sorry to the heart for you, sir," says she; "and if you care for yoursilf, you'll not let a thrifle of money prevint you from trating yoursilf to some genteel cratur of a wife. Will you just give a look to this swate girleen, God bless it!" added she, kissing the wee lassie, "and say if ye could grudge her bit of brade, poor sowl, or the brade of the moder that bore her?"

"But I cannot get anybody to please me, woman," says I, jocularly.

"Take my word and honour, as an Irishwoman," says Peggy, in Hibernian warmth, "you'll bring the shame of the world on yoursilf, and ye will, ye will. I thought once you could not live after my mistress Susan; but she's lost to you, anyhow, the jewel, and I only know you will never have it in your power to get a glance of love from such two swate eyes again."

"There are better fish in the sea," says I, "than ever came out o' it."

"Don't attimpt to say so," says she; "for, though many a nate, dacent girl is to the fore, 'tis a silfish cratur they wish bad luck to; and maybe your honour will let me tell you the iligant ould story of the 'Crooked Stick' for your idification. Well, then," she went on, "you must know there was a whimsical young woman sent into a green lane, having on either side tall and beautiful trees; and she was tould to pick out and bring away the straightest and purtiest branch she could find. She was left at liberty to go to the end, if she plased; but she was not, by any means, to be allowed to retrace her steps, to make choice of a stick she had already slighted. Beautiful and tall were the boughs of the trees, and swate to look upon; and each in its turn was decaived in not being preferred; for the silly maiden went on and on, without any rason, vainly expecting to get a more perfect stick than those that courted her two eyes. At long and last, the trees became smaller, while blurs and warts disfigured their crooked boughs. She could not, she thought within hersilf, choose such rubbitch. But what was she to do?—for lo! she had arrived at the ind of her journey, and, instead of a nate young branch from a stately tree, an ould deformed bough was all that remained within her reach. So the silly maiden had to take the *crooked stick* at last, and return with it in her hand, amidst the jeering of the beautiful trees which she had formerly despised. And now," said Peggy Byrne, in conclusion, "remember the *crooked stick*, your honour, and give over your dilly-dallying, or sure enough you'll get it—you will."

I laughed heartily at the Irish nurse's foolery; and that very night, I mind, I had as queer a dream as mortal ever dreamed. I thought I was out on a fine summer's day in the month o' June, fishing in the stream a little below Selkirk, where the Tweed is augmented by the Ettrick. I

was angling, I thought, with the artificial fly in the manner o' worm; and, though the water was very turbid, trouts, like silly women, are so apt to be taken with *appearances*, that that day multitudes o' them eagerly seized the deadly barb, and only found out the deceit at the precious cost o' their lives! I imagined I was particularly nice, however, in choosing the fish I raised; for, as I drew them ashore upon the nearest channel, instead o' rinning forward with alacrity and seizing them, I thought I stood like an innocent, turning owre in my mind whether the trouts were o' such a quality as to repay me for the trouble o' stooping to take them up. Presently the fish, not being properly banked, would have broken the gut and torn themselves from the hook, leaving me in bewilderment and shame, to execrate my ain stupid indecision. But this was not the worst o' it; for in some cases I actually fancied I saw the same bonny detached trouts taken further down the stream by other anglers, while a number, after a fierce struggle to get free, would have been seen pining, with wounded hearts, at the bottom o' the water, unable apparently either to feed or spawn. To add to my vexation, Maister Brown, the stream began suddenly to clear, while the fish, from the quantity o' food that covered the water, grew lazy, and would not so muckle as move. At last I thought I threw in, for the last time, in a fit o' desperation, and what should I do but hook a huge salmon by the side fin! He immediately started in beautiful style for his far hame, the sea; and as a fish so fastened was no better secured than a young bluid-horse bridled by the middle instead o' the mouth, I saw there was nothing for it but following him, and using my legs as weel as my line. Away we accordingly went, at a dead heat, down the Tweed—starting from about Ettrick foot, while the fish every now and then would have sprung furiously out o' the water in his attempts to shiver the line with his tail. It would not

a' do, however; and, after a great many hours' play, I thought we landed at "Coldstream Brig-end," where, finding him greatly exhausted, I drew him closer and closer to the edge, whiles giving him a brattle out into the deep water, till seeing him unable to give any further resistance, I gaffed and secured him. But, judge o' my mortification, when, instead o' a bonny plump salmon, a lean. deformed skate lay in the dead-thraws upon the white gravel, to mock me for my pains! The bairns, at this moment, whom I thought I saw distinctly on the bridge, setting up a wicked shout o' derision, I awoke with the noise. Nor will I ever forget the agony that I was in—the sweat ran from my body like a planet shower; and do what I liked, I could not get the disagreeable image o' the ill-coloured toom skate from my mind; for aye, as I dovered owre again, I was as suddenly started by the presence o' the hateful fish laying itsel cheek by jowl alongside o' me.

You may laugh as ye like, Maister Brown, at this strange dream; but, when you hear how significantly the crowning event in the after-history o' my life was prefigured by it, you'll see less cause for laughter, I'm thinking. It might be half-a-year subsequent to the dream, or thereabouts, that I happened to be in Wooler on a jaunt; and as the place and the folk about it were muckle to my mind, I was induced to protract my stay for several weeks. I soon made the acquaintance o' several o' the young leddies o' the same *caste* as mysel; and, among others, I got uncommonly intimate with a Miss Cochrane, and her sister Arabella. The former, I was told, had a hantle o' siller, besides rich expectations from some auld aunt in Newcastle; while stories were whispered o' the prodigious number o' offers she had refused, and that he would be considered a lucky man who should make off with such a capital prize! Here, thinks I, I've fallen on my feet at last; and, if I do not impove the golden opportunity to my advantage, blame me. Miss Coch-

rane continued shy, however; and I was beginning to despair o' making any impression, when, one night, being at a party with her and her sister, at the house o' a Mrs Cavendish, we a' three grew so delighted with each other, that it was agreed, before parting, that, as neither Arabella nor hersel had ever seen Coldstream, and as they had a genteel cousin there, we should take a trip to it the next day in a post-chaise. Off we accordingly went on the ensuing morning; and, as soon as we reached the town, a messenger was despatched for the genteel cousin, when presently a little dissipated-looking creature made his appearance, who, at the sight o' his dear Sophia and Arabella, was like to go into ecstatics. He did not need to be asked twice to join us at dinner; for he moved about as if the inn had been his ain, and he fell to the dainties we had ordered as greedily as a half-famished cur. The wine and brandy, too, were sent down his throat as if his stomach had been a sand-bed, and he kept drinking glasses with us every whip-touch, first asking me to join him, and then his "dear cousins," till, long before the dinner was owre, I had got so completely *rosined*, that I could not weel make out where I was, or satisfactorily account for the appearance o' the two strange women that sat on each side o' me. The haze, however, that hung owre me began to go off in the course o' the evening; and, when I cleared up sufficiently, the Coldstream birkie proposed that we should sally out and get a sight o' the famed "Brig-end," where the well-known Peter Moodie celebrated clandestine marriages.

"I'm yer man for a spree," says I—for the brandy, by this time, had flown to my head. And, starting to my feet, and seizing Miss Cochrane by the arm—"Come, my dawty," cries I, "let us away down to the brig and see Hymen's Altar!"

"Oh, Master Blackwell!" says madam, in girlish bashfulness, allowing hersel at the same time to be led off,

"only think what our friends will say, should they hear of *us* being there! I would not for ten thousand worlds they should know."

"Fiddledee, fiddledum!" shouted I; and off we strutted, uttering a' the balderdash and foolery in the world on our way down; and, when we came to the Brig-end, I began to sing, at the very top o' my lungs,

"There's naebody coming to marry me."

But I had scarcely finished the first line o' the sang, when forward stepped an auld man, with a snuffy white napkin round his neck, and with a head as white as the driven snaw; and says he, touching his hat with his hand—

"Would ye be wanting my services, sir?"

"What services in a' the world can ye render, auld carle?" says I.

"I'm the man that marries the folk," says he; "my name's Peter Moodie."

"And what do you seek for your marriage-service?" says I.

"Three half-crowns frae working-folk, and a guinea frae the like o' you, sir," says he.

"There's a crown-piece, my guid fellow," says I, "and let me see you go owre the foolery—for the very fun o' the thing."

"Do, do, Peter!" cried the youngest Cochrane and her cousin, eagerly.

"Wha shall I buckle, then?" says the mimicking priest.

"Our two selves," says I, pressing Miss Cochrane's hand, in maudlin fondness.

"What's your name, sir?" says the white-headed impostor, looking me gravely in the face.

"Richard Blackwell," says I, proudly.

"Speak after me, then," says he—"I, Richard Blackwell, do take thee, Sophia Cochrane, to be my married wife, and

do promise to be a loving husband unto thee until death shall separate us."

I did as I was ordered by the body, and he next caused Miss Cochrane to take me by the right hand, and repeat a few words after him, muckle to the same effect. This being done—"Richard Blackwell and Sophia Cochrane." added the carle, with an air o' mock solemnity, "I proclaim you husband and wife."

"Get on with the ceremony, ye drunken neer-do-weel," bawled I; "the five shillings will surely go a deal farther than that. We're not half married!"

"Try to get off, if you can, and see how ye'll thrive," says Peter, and staggered off, leaving us to enjoy what I considered at the time a mere farce or bit o' harmless diversion.

Having returned to the inn, we had another bottle o' brandy, to drink to the health and happiness o' Mr and Mrs Blackwell; and, as I was willing to carry on the joke, I good-naturedly humoured the fools—for what will a man not do in drink—and thanked them with sham politeness for their kind wishes. The bill at length was sent up to *our lordships;* but, as the cousin had no small change on him, and as the leddies had left their purses behind them in the bustle o' setting off, I had to pay dearly for my "whistle," but I cared not. Having got a' settled, we packed into the chaise, and drove off for Wooler; but I was so far gone, that I lay as sound as a tap on the auldest Cochrane's shoulder, until we came within a mile o' the village; and when I awoke the *mercury* had fallen so low, that I felt as stupid and dead as a door nail. No sooner, however, did we reach their door in the main street, than I banged up in the chaise, and attempted to jump out; but, alack-a-day! my legs fell from beneath me as if they did not belong to my body, while my puir head swam round and round, like a light bung in a gutter.—"Will ony o' you

chiels," hiccuped I to the crowd that stood in front o' the chaise window, "carry me to Lucky Hunter's?"

"Ye maun pack in wi' your wife, Billy," cried they.

"I've no *wife*," stammered I; "I'm Ma-ma-ister Blackwell, the braw sou-sou-ter o' Selkirk."

At hearing this, some witty rascal roared out—

> "*Doun* wi' the souters o' Selkirk,
> And *up* wi' the Yearl o' Hume."

And, suiting the action to the words, *doun* from the chaise they accordingly dragged me; but, as I would not on any account enter Miss Cochrane's house, the youngsters lifted me into a butcher's slaughtering barrow, and whirled me along the pavement like daft devils; and in the lapse o' a few minutes, I was thudded against my landlady's door, and tumbled out on the dirty street, as unceremoniously as if I had been the "lord o' misrule" at a village feast. Being carried up-stairs and laid upon a sofa, I was owre asleep before ye could say "Jock Robinson," and as unconscious o' the late hullybilloo as the bairn unborn. The burning fever, however, that the drink had flung me into would not let me sleep for any length o' time; and about two in the morning I awoke, with my tongue sticking to my mouth, as if it had been tacked; nor could I open my lips wide aneugh to let in a teaspoon shank, though my very throat was cracking with the heat, like a piece o' parched muirland. In raising mysel on the sofa, I fortunately got hold o' the bell-rope, and, resting mysel on my elbow, I rang it as furiously as if the house had been in flames about my ears.

"What, what, what is the matter with you?" sputtered the terrified landlady, scrambling up the stairs. "People will think it is the fire-bell."

"It is a great enough fire-bell," says I; "and if ye do not keep back your abominable candle, you'll set my breath a-low."

"The good folk will then take you for one of the new lights," says she.

"For mercy's sake," cries I, "bring up your water-pipe, and let it run doun my throat, to slocken me!"

"There's not such a thing as a water-pipe in Wooler," says the aggravating creature. "The good people in this quarter haven't the *spirit* in them that you've got."

"Oh, do not torture me, wife," said I, "with your off-taking way, for I could drink the Till dry, could I get at it."

"You shall have a proper sluicing in it in the morning, then," says the unfeeling wretch; "so just lay your head high till daylight comes in."

Seeing I could not better myself, I flung my head down with a terrible clash on the side o' the sofa; while my thirst grew so intolerable, that the very breath which issued from my cramped lips was like to stifle me. In this indescribably miserable state I lay till about seven o'clock, when, by a sickly effort o' strength, I got up, and tried to walk across the floor; but my brain reeled at every step, and my limbs shook beneath me like willow wands. With my eyes swimming in dizziness, I next sought the washhand-basin, and plunging my head into the cauld water I kept it there for nearly three minutes, drinking copiously at the same time; and though the terrible stimulus brought on a severe shivering qualm, that lasted for nearly a quarter-of-an-hour, it cleared my faculties sufficiently to lay me open to a' the violence o' self-reproach. Having swallowed a beefsteak, with plenty o' mustard and pepper, I felt comparatively recruited, at least in body; and when the day had worn on to about four in the afternoon, I thought, as the reading-room was only at the next door, I might contrive to slip in unobserved, and get a sight o' the papers. I accordingly stole out, and got into the room without meeting any one, where I found an auldish man in a brown tufted wig, who

used glasses, sitting brooding owre the *bad times* fornent the window. He did not take any notice o' me, nor I o' him; but I had not got weel seated, when in steps a spruce-looking body, in a Petersham frock, who immediately marched up to the spectacled dumby, and inquired if there was any news going.

"None," replied the latter, in a sepulchral tone o' voice, "neither foreign nor domestic."

"You haven't heard, then," says the other, "of Miss Cochrane's affair?"

"Has she been *seized?*" says the elderly gentleman, taking off his spectacles, and turning up the whites of his eyes.

"Ay, ay, heart and body," says the younger, in a fit of laughter; "she has been seized by her husband, a half-witted idiot of a fellow, a native of the town of Selkirk."

"Ye dinna mean to say sae?" rejoins his friend.

"The simpleton was hooked at Coldstream Brig-end," cries the young man in the surtout, as I stole out, in an agony o' remorse, and directed my steps to my lodgings, on the most freendly terms with desperation. My worst fears were instantly confirmed; for I no sooner had entered the house, than Mrs Hunter placed a letter in my hand from the youngest Cochrane. I have carried the thing about with me for these ten years now; and, as I regard it as a kind o' curiosity, ye would aiblins like to hear it. It's just word for word to this day as I received it:—

"My dear Brother,—Mrs Blackwell, your much-attached wife, has passed a miserable night—going out of one hysteric into another; and bitterly lamenting that she should have given her hand to one who seems determined to repay the affection she has heaped upon him with a neglect which, if persisted in, will not fail to break her loving heart. She has tasted nothing since she left Coldstream, save a mouthful of cold water, and a little thin

gruel; and our fear is, that the poor soul will starve herself to death! Do come down immediately, and try to comfort her, and you may rely upon my kind offices in doing away with the unpleasant feelings to which your unaccountable conduct last night has given rise.—Your affectionate sister,

"ARABELLA COCHRANE."

I turned in actual loathing from the perusal o' this artful scrawl; while my heart was like to burst with the wild tumult o' feeling that distracted me. "Is it possible," asked I, again and again, o' mysel, "that I am married? No, no, it cannot be; and rather than live with a woman I do not like, I'll leave the country, and transport myself for life to the farthest isle o' Sydney Cove." How I was kept in my right judgment throughout that sleepless and miserable night, is a wonder to me till this day. Twenty times did I fondly convince mysel that it was a' but a crazed dream; and as often did the truth flash upon my mind, curdling my very bluid with shame and remorse. The morning at length breaking, I hastily arose, threw on my clothes, and hurried down to the "Cottage" for a post-chaise; and in less than an hour I was off, bag and baggage, on my way to Selkirk. But bad news travel unco fast; and, long before I reached the town, the story o' my clandestine marriage was in the mouths o' auld and young; and, on driving up to my ain house, the first sight I saw was the big radical flag wapped to the chimney, and flapping out owre the premises, in token o' rejoicing.

"Oh, Tam Wilson," cried I to the foreman, stamping my foot in madness, "what, in the name o' a' that's guid, has tempted ye to hoist that infernal rag above my house? Tear it doun this moment, sirrah, if ye value either your maister's character or your ain employ."

"It was put up, sir, in honour o' your marriage," says he.

"Breathe that word again in my hearing," says I, "and I'll cleave you to the teeth, ye scoundrel!"

In the midst o' our cangling, a chaise rolled up to the door, when out jumped my two she-tormentors, and their little blackavised cousin, and marched direct into the shop. A *scene* immediately ensued that baffles a' description. The auldest Cochrane first tried on the fainting and greeting; but finding, after a great deal o' attitudinising, that she was as far from her purpose as ever, she next began to storm like a fury, and even had the audacity and ill-breeding to smack me in the face—not with her lips truly, but with her open hand—using towards me, at the same time, language that would disgrace an outcast in a Bridewell. After expending the whole o' her wrath on my head, the party left the shop, threatening that they would make my purse smart for it in the way o' a settlement. And they were as guid as their word; for I had forty pounds a-year to settle on a person the law acknowledged as my lawfully-wedded wife, besides incurring legal expenses to the amount o' three hundred pounds.

Years have come and passed sin a' this happened; but never has my unlucky marriage gone down in Selkirk; and I not only have lost my "status" in society, but my presence, at a public meeting or the like—even at this day—is the ready signal for the evil-disposed to kick up a riot. This I might even get owre; but when I think o' the cheerlessness o' my ain house, and the sad desolateness o' my heart—that my only sister, whose advice I have often treated with owre little deference, has sunk into the grave with a broken heart—that I have none to take an interest or enter into the cause o' the inquietude and suffering that has silently worn down the strength o' my constitution—and that, were I dying the morn, the fremmit must close my eyes, and my effects go to enrich an ingrate:—I say, Maister Brown, when I think on the misery that my foolishness has

brought upon me, and reflect how happy I might have been, had I not become the dupe o' my ain erroneous opinions and self-conceit—my very heart sickens within me; and, in the bitterness o' my feelings, I earnestly wish that I were laid by the side o' my puir sister, and my head at rest for ever below the sod.

ROSEALLAN'S DAUGHTER.

THE old strength of Roseallan cannot now boast even a site on the face of the earth; for (so at least says tradition) the waters of the Whitadder run over the place where it reared its proud turrets. It is sad enough to look upon the green grass, and contemplate, with a heart beating with the feelings that respond to antiquarian reminiscences, the velvet covering of nature spread over the place where chivalry, love, and hospitality claimed the base-court, the bower, and the banqueting hall; but green grass, though long, and whistling in the winds of winter, carries not to the sensitive mind the feeling of mournful change and desolation suggested by the murmuring stream, as, rolling over the site of an old castle, it speaks its eloquent anger and triumph over the proud structures of man. So long as there is apparent to the eye a place where the cherished object of memory might, without violence to the ordinary conditions of nature, have stood, the plastic fancy asserts instantly her constructive power, and sets before the eye of the mind a structure that satisfies all our historical associations; but the moment we see the favoured place occupied by a running water, vindicating, apparently, a right to an eternal and unchangeable course, the many-coloured goddess takes fright, and refuses to obey the behest of the will that wishes her to compete with nature in the work of creation. We have stated a tradition, and we do not answer for it. There may be doubts now about the precise locality of the old strength of Roseallan, but there are none in regard to the fact of its last proprietor having been Sir Gilbert Rollo, a favourite of King James V., who saw no better mode of

rewarding his loyal subject for important services, than by giving him a grant of the castle and domains, upon the old feudal tenure of ward-holding. This the king was enabled to do, from the property having fallen to the crown by the constructive rebellion of its former proprietor, whose name we have not been able to discover. Sir Gilbert Rollo had a wife and one daughter, the latter of whom was called Matilda. According to the account contained in some letters still extant in the possession of a branch of the family, this young lady was possessed of charms of so extraordinary a nature as to make her famous throughout "broad Scotland." Having little faith in verbal descriptions, as a mean of conveying to the mind of one who has not seen the original, any adequate idea of those peculiar qualities of form, colour, proportion, and expression that go to form what is called female beauty, we will not transcribe the elaborate account of her perfections which we have had the privilege of perusing. We content ourselves with stating, what will give a far better notion of her excellence, that there can be no doubt of the fact of her having been famous throughout Scotland at that period as the fairest woman in the kingdom. It has been stated that Queen Mary showed her picture to some of her French followers, with a view to impress upon their minds that, beautiful as she was, her country had produced one even transcending her; though some have asserted that the picture which hung in Mary's bedroom was that of a daughter of Crighton of Brunston. We cannot reconcile the different statements; but it is enough for our purpose that Matilda Rollo was supposed to be entitled to compete for this distinction.

Sir Gilbert and Lady Rollo were staunch Catholics of the primary church. They gratified King James, by extending their hatred to all those who showed any disposition to favour the partial reformation effected by Henry VIII. of England; whose law of the six articles was then a subject

of bitter contention among all parties, both in England and Scotland. This religious prejudice was of greater importance in the family of Roseallan Castle than as a mere question of faith. It interfered with the success of a suitor for the hand of Matilda—an English knight of the name of Sir Thomas Courtney. This individual, who was much famed on the English side of the Borders for his knightly bearing, manly proportions, and beauty of person, was ambitious of carrying off the fairest woman of Scotland; as well from an ardent passion with which he was inflamed, as from the pride of having to boast among his English compeers of being the possessor of so inestimable a jewel as the "Rose of Roseallan." His suit had been favoured for a time by Matilda's father, but had been discharged as soon as it was known that the lover of Matilda was an admirer of Henry's new system of religious reformation. This determination on the part of her parents was not disagreeable to the daughter, who had never been able to see, in the proud stateliness of the handsome Englishman, those softer qualities which could enable him to respond to the high aspirations and impassioned feelings of what she conceived to be genuine romantic love.

For a considerable period, Sir Thomas had not been a visiter at Roseallan. He had, however, left a deputy in the person of Bertha Maitland, who had been Matilda's nurse, and was still retained in the family as a favoured domestic. A favourer of the religious tenets of the new English reformers, she had looked favourably on the suit of the lover; and there was reason to suppose that English gold, as well as English principles of religion, had been employed to gain over her interest in behalf of the Englishman. Her efforts had been sedulously devoted to the excitement of some feeling of attachment on the part of Matilda; but as women can only excite love in their female companions by rivalship, her praises went for nothing more than an old woman's gar-

rulity. Matilda felt it impossible to give her affections to her English suitor, and was glad to take refuge behind the commands of her father, never to see him, and never to listen to his high-flown professions of passion.

Many other suitors sought the favour of the far-famed Rose of Roseallan. They were of the highest of the land—many of them the courtiers of King James; and the rules and canons of love-making, taken from the old romances—"Amadis de Gaul" and others—were learned by heart, and acted on by tongue and eyes. But all was in vain. There was not a single individual among all those who resorted to Roseallan, not even Sir George Douglas (who had been favoured by her father), that had been able to excite the least spark of affection in the bosom of the fair object of their suit. The circumstance was remarkable, but not the less true; and the difficulty could not be solved by the ordinary expedients. Though the most beautiful woman in Scotland at that time, she was the humblest; and no rejected lover could lay his bad fortune to the account of pride, or solace his self-love by an imputed arrogance of beauty. The perfect disengagement (so far as could be observed) of her affections, kept up the hopes of her English admirer, who learned everything that took place at the castle through the medium of his hired agent. The mediations of Bertha were kept up; but her praises had, by repetition, become tiresome, and fell upon the ear of her fair mistress like the tuneless notes of the birds that, unfitted to be of the choir of the forest, chirped on the old walls of Roseallan.

The castle was so situated that one end of it was almost washed by the waters of the Whitadder. A small bridge was thrown over the river, and communicated with a deep wood on the other side, then called the Satyr's Hall. In this wood, and towards the end of the bridge, was a small bower, which had been built for the sake of Matilda, and in which she often sat during the heat of the mid-day sun, listening

to the songs of the birds, or reading some of the old romances and ballads of Scotland, which she loved with the devotion of the heart. It seemed to be in the imaginary world of these narratives that she had found the lover who defied the efforts of so many suitors to obtain a place in her affections. Her rapt fancy, occupied in the contemplation of some form which it had painted with all the fond colours of exaggerated beauty, carried her away from the ordinary thoughts and feelings of life. Yet it was not all imagination; she did not carry her romance so far as to uphold that no man of mere flesh and blood, however well put together, and however well decorated by the smiles of nature (the artificial ornaments of fashion she valued not), could satisfy the heart that had enshrined within it those hallowed images of a beautiful creative imagination. One who knew human nature, and the habits of thinking and acting of imaginative females, would have discovered, in this love of the fair inhabitants of her own Elysium, the true reason of her apparent coldness towards the most beautiful and accomplished men of her time; but they would have suspected that the form of beauty she thus cherished had some foundation in nature; and that—though an excited fancy engages in its service the young female heart, and, having limned for it an ideal object to contemplate, ceases not till it engages for the image the most pure, and sometimes the strongest affections of the heart—there is still a substratum in reality to which all may be referred. So was it with Matilda Rollo. One day, when sitting in her bower, she had fallen asleep with a volume of Italian poems in her hand. She had been busy culling roses—the bower was strewed with them; and the sun sent his rays past the window and entrance of the retreat, as if to avoid an interruption of her repose. She was, however, interrupted by another cause; and, looking up, she saw the face of a man gazing steadfastly upon her through the window. Alarmed, she started up—the individual dis-

appeared; but the beauty of his countenance, which transcended anything she had ever seen on earth, or dreamed of in the grandest of her rapt imaginations, left an impression on her which she never forgot. She was supplied with a form of beauty on which her fancy might luxuriate, and to which she would refer all the descriptions in her favourite works; nor did she fail in this—for, though she could not discover who the individual was, and did not see him again, she cherished the beloved image as a treasure, and, day and night, in her fanciful musings and in her dreams, she delighted to contemplate the beauty of her imaginary lover.

One morning Bertha accosted her young mistress in such a manner as to excite her curiosity.

"The cushat doesna use to coo when the owl flies," said she. "Heard ye, my young leddy, the sounds last night in the beechwood?"

"The owl is generally busy there at night," replied Matilda. "I went to sleep early, and never waked till morning, when I heard the wind booming like a moon-baying spaniel through the forest. It had begun before you slept; but you know, Bertha, you find often a magic virtue in night sounds that no one else has the wits to discover."

"A lover's flute has mair virtue in it for young maidens than for auld witches," replied the other, looking knowingly. "Sir George Douglas has tried his looks and his speech upon you; his success may, peradventure, be greater through the means o' music, the lover's charm."

"I understand you not, good Bertha," replied Matilda; "you do not mean to say that Sir George Douglas was bold enough to serenade me in that house into which he might have entered, and, by a father's authority, claimed my attention."

"If it wasna Sir George, ye can maybe tell me wha it was," replied the old nurse, looking cunningly into the face of Matilda.

"I can tell ye nothing, Bertha, for I heard nothing," said the other.

This conversation, which was interrupted by the entrance of Lady Rollo, roused the curiosity of Matilida, who, ignorant of the interest felt by Bertha in the suit of the English lover, did not observe in her words or manner any wish to acquire information, but only a simple badinage on a subject of love. She trusted her nurse implicitly as her best friend, and sought her counsel often in those moments of unhappiness when her mother interrupted the imaginative course of her life by some effort to get her affections fixed on a proud baron or a courtly knight. The consolations of Bertha were ever ready; and her innocent and unsuspicious friend did not observe, in the nurse's zealous efforts to confirm her against the marriage-plans of her mother, the anxious workings of the concealed and paid deputy of a lover also rejected. She intended to have questioned her father about the sounds in the wood; but that day did not afford an opportunity for the gratification of her wish. Left to her own imagination, she concluded that some of her lovers had presumed to address her after the Spanish form of the evening serenade; and, while she resolved upon listening on the following evening, she was determined to take no notice of the importunities of her impassioned lover.

The evening set in with great beauty. The full moon rose high in the heavens, in which there was not discernible the thinnest wreath of vapour to form a resting-place for the eye, as it wandered among the endless regions of pure illuminated ether. The bright queen, paramount over all, engrossed the whole hemisphere, reducing the twinkling stars to the dimensions of small satraps of distant provinces, whose smallness increased the splendour of her august majesty. The stillness of nature suggested the idea of a general worship of the presiding genius of the night. Every wind was stilled, and even the Whitadder seemed to glide

along with a greater smoothness than usual; while its singing, mellow voice seemed as if it rejoiced in the bright reflection of the gay queen of the heavens it held in its bosom. It was now about nine o'clock. Matilda was sitting at the casement of her apartment, overlooking the stream—her eyes were fixed on the beautiful scene; the towers of Roseallan threw over a part of the river a shadow, at the farther extremity of which, and, as it were, at the point of the eastern turret, the round form of the moon, like a bright silver salver, lay still in the bosom of the water. A little beyond this striking object stood her bower in the wood; and so bright was the flood of light that penetrated every part of the forest, that she saw the door and window of the romantic retreat so perfectly, that she could have detected the entrance of the august Oberon, or even Piggwiggan himself, if either of them could have left their revels on the greensward, in that auspicious night, to favour her bower with a visit. The scene was so inviting, that she would have been tempted to wander over the bridge into the wood, if the information of Bertha had not pointed out to her the danger.

As she continued her gaze on the beautiful scene, her attention was claimed by the form of a man gliding between the trees in the wood. He came forward to the edge of the river, and stood in a contemplative attitude, with his arm resting on the branch of an old beech, and his head directed in such a way as to suggest the idea that he was looking towards the casement of Matilda's apartment. On seeing him take this attitude, she retired back, to prevent her white dress from attracting his attention. A slight examination satisfied her that he was an individual below the rank of life in which she moved. He was of great height and commanding aspect; but his dress was that of the son of a free farmer of that time, being composed of the rough doublet, bound with a broad leather belt, and the slouched hat, made

of thick plaits of coarse straw, and ornamented with a black riband tied round the junction of the rim and the crown. Though worn by the inferior orders, the dress was a noble one, imparting to the wearer an air of robust strength, with that easy carelessness and rude grace which forms the *dignité* of the freeborn son of the mountain. It was only the general outline of his appearance and dress which Matilda could thus discover through the light of the moon; but she saw enough to excite her attention, and she continued to notice his motions.

The stranger stood in the same attitude of mute contemplation for a considerable time, his face still directed toward the same part of the building, in spite of the powerful claims on his eye and attention that were put forth by the splendid scene around him, with the round figure of the moon shining in the waters at his feet. At length he took his arm from the branch of the old beech, and, turning round, slowly directed his steps towards Matilda's wood-bower, into which he entered, bending his tall person to enable him to get in at the door—a circumstance that satisfied Matilda of his great height, as her father—a very tall man—could enter without that preliminary. All was for a time still and silent; the gentle rippling of the Whitadder deriving from the absence of any other sound a distinctness which, in its turn, added to the depth of the quiet of sleeping nature. A soft sound began to rise in low strains of sweet music, coming apparently from the bower. It was the voice of a man, modulated into the tones of the pathetic expression of heartfelt sentiment; the air was slow, and filled with cadences which brought down the voice to the lowest note; the words —pronounced in the low tone of the music, and run together by the fluent character of the melody which accompanied them—could not be distingnished; but the effect of the plaintive sounds, co-operating with the silence of night, and the extraordinary scene of lunar splendour exhibited

by earth and heaven, was felt by Matilda as the nearest approximation she had yet experienced to the realisation of her imaginative creations. The music continued for some time, and then ceased at the termination of one of the deep cadences, prolonged apparently for the purpose of expressing a finale. The individual came out of the bower, and stood again on the side of the river—the shadow of his tall figure fell on the ground like the reflection of the beech on which he leaned; he continued his gaze for some time in dead silence, and then, turning, disappeared in the wood.

Matilda was unable, after all the consideration she could bestow on the subject, to come to any conclusion satisfactory to herself, as to either the identity of the individual, or the object he had in view. During the night, the scene, which had been deeply impressed on her mind, was verified by the power of fancy; and there was a certain romance about it which recommended it to her heart. In the morning she questioned Bertha, to whom she confided her every secret.

"I am perplexed, Bertha," she began. "You asked me yesterday if I had heard any sounds in the Satyr's Hall, and I have that question now to put to you. The man that sings in my bower must have some other object in view than gratifying his own ears or those of the night birds with his plaintive melody. What means it, Bertha? Come, my good friend, unravel the mystery, and the grateful thanks of your Matilda will reward you."

"If the throstle hen kens nae the mottled lover that sings to her, what other bird o' the wood can come to the knowledge?" answered Bertha. "I'm owre auld a bird to ken noo the notes o' a lover, or to tell a moulted feather frae the new plume; but, as far as my auld een would carry, your night freend looked mair curiously at the east tower o' Roseallan than men generally do at grey wa's in the light o' the moon. He's as tall, at ony rate, as Sir

Thomas, and I thocht there was only ae man o' his height in the land where he sojourns. But I think I could unmask his secresy."

Bertha looked, to see the effect of her allusion to her principal; but she got no encouragement.

"Whoever he may be," answered Matilda, "he is a very different kind of individual from Sir George Douglas; nor is it Sir Thomas Courtney. The melody is too sweet for the execution of an English throat. He is a Scotchman; probably some of my Edinburgh courtly lovers, in the disguise of a free son of the mountains. I cannot listen to his strains; but you can safely approach the bower, and may, as you yourself have proffered, ascertain for me who and what he is."

"My young leddy's wish is Bertha's command," answered the old woman; "watch me with your hazel eyes, over the white bridge, this night at nine. If he comes again, he shall not go away unknown."

When the evening came, Matilda was again at her casement. The night was as beautiful as the preceding one; but there was a thin halo round the moon that gave her a softer aspect; and the diminished sound of the mellow ripple of the Whitadder seemed to indicate that there was a zephyr abroad whose presence could be detected only by that delicate test. About the hour of nine, she saw the thin figure of old Bertha, rolled up in a cloak, steal silently from a postern of the east wall, and creep slowly down to the end of the light, airy bridge, that spanned, with its pure white arms, the bosom of the river. Stretching forth her bony hand, she seized the rail, and, having got a firm footing, walked with slow steps along the planks. Her progress was slow, nervous, and unsteady. Matilda was solicitous for her safety; for she had never seen Bertha venture along the bridge at night, and she herself seldom crossed it after nightfall, even with the aid of a resplendent moon. Her

attention was fixed upon her to the exclusion of all notice of any proceedings on the other side of the stream. The old woman had got to the middle of the bridge, and Matilda saw with horror her supposed faithful friend fall. Starting from her seat, she rushed down, and in an instant was at the end of the bridge. Seizing the rail, she hurried along, and found the body of the nurse lying extended on the planks, apparently senseless, though she had merely experienced an ordinary fall, the result of a stumble. Bending down, the anxious girl was proceeding to lift her up, when she was, in an instant, seized by the arms of a strong man, and hurried away to the further end of the bridge. Stunned by this sudden seizure, succeeding as it did the anxiety under which she laboured for her nurse, she was unable even to scream, and lay in the arms of the person that bore her away, helpless, and nearly senseless. When she recovered herself so far as to be conscious of her situation, she found she was in the wood, and heard the sound of the voices of several men, among whom she thought she observed the disguised figure of a gentleman. They had wrapped a large cloak round her, and were in the act of putting her on the back of a jennet that stood ready saddled and bridled, when the man that held her was struck to the ground by some one that came behind him. He lay senseless at her feet; a second one shared his fate in an instant; and a third, after dealing a treacherous blow on the head of her deliverer, flung himself on a horse that stood alongside of the jennet, and galloped off at the top of his speed. Meanwhile, she was again seized by another man, and soon found herself reclining in her own bower.

"The feet o' the remaining horses," said a voice at her feet, "are raisin the echoes o' the Satyr's wood. The spoilers have recovered, and have fled after their master, who is, by this time, by the side o' the Tweed. Hoo fares Matilda Rollo? Can it be excused by high birth and beauty

that the salvation o' their possessor frae the arms o' an English reformer cam frae the courage or the good fortune o' ane that daurna lift his face to ask forgiveness for doin the duty o' a fellow-creature?"

"Whoever you are," cried Matilda, as she recovered, "you have done little in saving me, if Bertha Maitland lies drowned in the Whitadder; and that blood that flows down your face may be the dear price of my safety." And she started to her feet, as if she were to fly to save her friend.

"Content yersel, fair leddy," said the individual who still knelt at her feet; "my wound is sma', and as to your auld nurse, I saw her rise without a helpin hand, and, like the stunned bird, shake her feathers, and return to Roseallan wi' a steadier step than when she wiled ye owre the bridge."

The last words were pronounced with that irresolution which resulted from a fear of a false impeachment, and were not heard or understood by Matilda, who, made easy on the subject of her solicitude, now contemplated the individual who had saved her. The blood flowed profusely over his face, yet she could perceive that he was the same person whom she had seen on the previous night; and the estimate she had then made of his character was realised. But a new source of curiosity and interest was now opened to her. She recognised in his countenance, which was formed after the finest model that ever came from the pencil of Apelles or the chisel of Praxiteles, the original of the image which she had so often, in that bower, called up to the contemplation of a fancy excited by the reading of "Amadis" or "Cavalcante." She was surprised and confused; her mind recurred back to former times; a floating vision crossed her fancy; she fixed her eyes on the beautiful, though blood-stained countenance of her protector, and, blushing to the ears, threw them again on the ground. Her confusion prevented her from speaking, as well as from rising to return

to the castle; and the doubt which clung to her mind, whether all the extraordinary proceedings of the last ten minutes were not a dream, added to her irresolution, and increased her embarrassment. A thought roused her suddenly to a sense of her position. Bertha would report her danger at the castle, and her father, with attendants, would instantly be in search of her, and in pursuit of the fugitives. Starting up, she made confusedly for the entrance of the bower; but the hem of her garment was held by her deliverer, who implored for a moment's delay.

"A second time have I been blessed," he ejaculated, as he wiped the blood from his face. "Three years have passed sin chance led me to look in at the window o' this wood-bower, where, gracious heaven! I saw the fair maiden o' Roseallan in the beauty o' a calm sleep. On this heather-bench, which was strewn wi' roses, her head rested; a book had fa'en frae her left hand, and her right was spread amang the flowing curls o' auburn hair that spread owre her neck and bosom. She dreamed, dootless, o' some happy lover; for, ever and anon, the smile played on her lips, and a tear struggled frae beneath the closed lids, and trickled down her cheeks. The vision enchanted me—I gazed, and could have gazed for ever. Matilda Rollo, you awoke, and saw my face as it disappeared from the window; but, Heaven have mercy on me! I have never awoke frae that hour! Wi' the might o' that enchantment, I wrestled as became a humble admirer o' what fate had put beyond my reach—but it was in vain, and I sought relief frae the new scenes o' Northumberland, while my brother tended a widowed mother. Fate has brought me again to the neighbourhood o' Roseallan; but duty must—ay, shall drive me again far away."

A sudden recollection glanced on the mind of Matilda; she threw her eyes upon his countenance, the origin of all her day-dreams, and quickly, and as if in terror, withdrew

them. A slight struggle released her from his gentle hold; she sprang out of the bower, and, with trembling steps, sought quickly the bridge, along which she hurried to the castle, where she sought instantly the chamber of Bertha. She found the old woman on her knees, at her evening's devotion.

"Ah! my leddy!" ejaculated the nurse, "why did ye leave me to seek my way back owre the brig, without the helpin hand o' your love and assistance? I was stunned sair by the fa', but I heard a sound o' voices as I recovered. I looked for you, and thought ye had returned to your apartment, whar I intended to have sought ye, after offering up my prayers to our Leddy for my deliverance."

"Sore stunned you must have been, good Bertha," said Matilda, "when you did not see my peril. Surely it is impossible. Did you not see your own Matilda carried off by men? Yet, why do I put that question? Surely it is sufficient to satisfy me that my dear friend was insensible and ignorant of my fate, when I see her occupied in prayer, in place of rousing my father to my rescue."

"Carried awa by men, child!" ejaculated the nurse, "and me ignorant o' the base treachery! By'r Leddy, I'm petrified! Whar were you carried, and wha were the ruffians? Kenned ye ony o' them? Doubtless, some o' our Holyrude knights in disguise. Speak, love, and relieve the beating heart o' your auld freend."

Matilda took Bertha up to her chamber, and recounted to her, in the confidence of love and friendship, all that had occurred to her—not even excepting the interview she had had in the wood-bower with her unknown but interesting deliverer.

"It was indeed he," she continued, "whose angelic countenance has so long hovered over me in my hours of retirement and in my dreams. He said he first saw me sleeping in my bower, and he spoke truth; for you must recollect,

Bertha, of my having informed you, at the time, years ago, of my terror on awakening and finding a human countenance staring in upon me through the window. My confusion prevented me from recognising him; but his countenance had got into my mind by the power of its beauty, while my memory sometimes let go the connection between the image which subsequently waxed so vivid, and the occasion by which it became a part of my thoughts. Oh, long have I cherished it, long assumed it as the face of the beatified hero of my histories, often limned it in air by the pregnant pencil of my fancy, dreamed of it, and wept as the light of day chased away the beloved form, and left me only in its place the things of ordinary life, the countenances of the knightly wooers of Holyrood!"

"And wha is he," inquired Bertha, "wha thus shoves his head into leddies' bowers, and sae timously saves them frae the hands o' kidnappers?"

"I know not, good Bertha," answered Matilda. "He is humble, and knows as well as I know that he and I never can be united. Already has duty taken him hence, and again is he to force himself far from me. I may never see him more. Would that I had never seen him, or were fated to see him ever!"

"Deliverer and spoiler are alike unkenned, then," said Bertha. "Hae ye nae suspicion o' the treacherous caitifs?" she added, looking searchingly into Matilda's face.

"None," replied the other. "I heard them not; but, Bertha, my best and truest friend, you must endeavour to learn for me some intelligence of my deliverer; for, though he cannot ever stand in any other relation to me, I could wish to know something of one whose image I have treasured up in my heart, even as a miser does the number that forms the index of his wealth. The widow loves the grave of her departed husband, and bedews it with tears, and carries away with her again the image of him she leaves to

the worms: he is to me as the entombed lover: life and death are not more distant, than the pride of the Rollos and the humility of the poor; but his name may become as the graven letters of the monumental stone—I may weep over it."

"Auld age is a puir scout, my Matilda," replied Bertha. "Ance I have failed in my commission, and a watery grave in the Whitadder had nearly been my reward. Tak the advice o' eild, and seek neither his name nor nativity. The duty ye owe to the pride and power o' the braw house o' Roseallan must ever prevent ye frae being his wedded wife; and, if it is ordained that ye must forget him, ye will banish him from your mind the mair easily that ye ken nae mair o' him than ye do o' the bird that birrs past ye in the wood —that it has a bonny feather in its tail."

"Ah, Bertha, that ignorance will not be to me bliss," said Matilda, sighing; "but, in the meantime, I must hasten to my mother, and tell her of the danger I have escaped."

"And o' the lover that saved ye, guileless simpleton!" said Bertha, seizing her by the arm. "The Whitadder leads nae mair certainly to the Tweed, than will the story o' yer danger lead to the discovery o' him ye are ashamed to acknowledge as a lover. Darkness waukens the owl, and yer mystery will open the eyes o' Lady Rollo. Let the bird sleep, or its scream will mak the wood ring."

Matilda saw, so far as she herself was concerned, the prudence of secresy, and was about to take leave of Bertha for the night, when Lady Rollo entered, and informed her daughter that Sir George Douglas of Haughhead had arrived to pay his addresses to her, and that she behoved to be in a proper state for meeting him in the morning at the first meal. Having delivered her command, the proud dame retired, leaving her daughter to the many distracting reflections suggested by all the conflicting and painful events of the evening. She retired to her couch, where

she was to resign herself to the domination of that rapt fancy that had so long led the train of her thoughts, and regulated the affections of her heart. Sleep forsook her pillow, or came only for short intervals, with the Genius of Dreams in his train. Waking or slumbering, the image of the unknown youth, who had made such an impression upon her heart, by the extraordinary deputed power of an imagination ever active in painting in bright colours all his perfections, was before her eyes. The higher these perfections and the brighter the beauties, the greater was the pain and the deeper the sobs of anguish that were wrung from her heart, by the conviction that her love was destined only to similate the cankerworm, that eats into the heart of the flower, and makes it perish.

Next day, she was compelled, with her hazel eyes still dimmed with tears, to meet Sir George Douglas, a man she had every reason to hate, as well from his proud assumption of a right to her affections, as from the mean and inconsistent mode of mediation he resorted to, and which she had learned from her mother that morning—by bribing her parents with large promises of a tempting dowery. With her feelings never kindly affected towards him, her heart burning with the thoughts of another, and her prejudices excited by the information she received from her mother, she conducted herself towards the knight with a *hauteur* that called forth his hurt pride and the indignation of her parents. After breakfast, she retired to her apartment, to feast her eyes with the vision of her bower—to her now enchanted—while her angry parents closeted themselves for a conference on the subject of Sir George's splendid offer, and the conduct of their daughter. Wrought up to a pitch of excitement by the united feelings of anger and ambition, they came to the critical determination of submitting her entirely to the power and discretion of Douglas, who, if he chose to wed her upon the sanction of their

consent, might, if he chose, dispense with that of the principal party interested. The project was instantly submitted to Douglas, a hard and unfeeling man, who, determined to possess Matilda upon any terms, closed readily with the offer, and a day was fixed at the end of a month for the marriage.

These preliminaries settled, Lady Rollo repaired to Matilda's apartment, where she found her with her head resting on her hand, and her eyes fixed on the wood-bower, where she had conjured up the image of her unknown lover.

"Thy conduct this day, Matilda," she began, "towards one of the gayest and richest knights of our land, the confidant of King James, and our especial friend and favourite, requireth the chastisement of the reproof of parental authority; but we have witnessed too long this pride of beauty in thee (which disdaineth the loves of mortals, and seduceth thee and thy heart into the airy regions of profitless romance), to remain contented now with mere words of argument, persuasion, or reproach. The day of these is by, with the hopes of the many lovers thou hast turned away from the gates of Roseallan; and the time for action—maugre thy wishes or thy prejudices—hath approached. Sir George Douglas is destined to be thy husband, and the day after the next feast of our Church is thy appointed bridal-day, whereunto thou hadst best prepare thyself with as much grace and favour as thou mayest be able to call up into thy fair face."

Saying these words, Lady Rollo retired hurriedly, as if with the view of avoiding a reply, or witnessing the sudden effects of her announcement. The words had fallen upon her daughter's heart like the announcement of a doom, and closed up the fountains of her tears. She sat riveted to the chair, incapable of speech, or even of thought. On partially recovering her senses, she found Bertha standing before her.

Rising into a paroxysm of struggling emotion, she flung her arms round the neck of the old nurse, and burst into a fit of hysterical weeping. The choking sobs seemed to come from the inmost recesses of her heart, and the burning tears, forcing the closed issues of their fountains, flowed down her cheeks, and dropped on the neck of her confidant. Bertha heard the intelligence, as it was communicated in detached syllables, in silence; and, having placed the unhappy maiden on her chair, sank into a train of thinking, which her young friend attributed to a sympathetic sorrow for her sufferings. The voice of Lady Rollo prevented the expected consolation, and obeying the command of her mistress, Bertha left the apartment, promising to return soon again. The day passed, and Matilda, unable to join the company in the western wing of the castle, remained in her apartment, sunk in despondency, and at times verging on the bleak province of despair.

Heedless of the gloom that overhung the minds of mortals, the bright moon rose again in the evening with undiminished splendour, throwing her silver beams over the tear-bedewed face of the sorrowful maiden, whose weeping was increased by the contrast of nature's loveliness. She sat again at the casement; her eyes wandered heavily over the scene that lay like a fair painting spread before her; the long, dark shadows of the wood, lying by the side of bright, moonlit plots of greensward, with their spangles of dew glittering like diamonds, reminded her of the chequered scenes of life, into the depth of one of the gloomiest of which she was now sunk; and her pain was increased as she felt herself, by the power of fate, contemplating again her wood-bower, which stood fair in the broad light of the moon. A sound struck her ears and called forth her attention. It was that of a lute, and came in dying notes from a distance in the wood. Gradually increasing in distinctness, it seemed to come nearer and nearer; and now

she recognised the air that was sung by her preserver on that night when she discovered him. The sound ceased suddenly, and she saw the figure of her preserver emerge from a thick part of the wood and pass into her bower. The same plaintive air was again raised, and spread around in soft mellifluous strains, suggesting the union, by some process unknown to metaphysical analysis, of light and sound—so connected and blended were the feelings produced by the soft beams of the moon and the sounds of the lute. The blessed sensation passed over her racked nerves like the odorous incense of the altar on the excited sensibility of the bleeding victim; her eyes and ears were versant with heaven, while her thoughts were claimed by the evil workings of bad angels; her heart swelled with the conflicting emotions, and a fresh burst of tears afforded her a temporary relief. Her paroxysm over, the soft sounds fell again upon her ear. Retaining her breath to drink deeper of the draught, she heard the notes gradually diminishing, as if the performer were retiring in the wood. He had left the bower unobserved; and the silence that now reigned around announced that he was gone.

For seven successive nights the music in the wood-bower had assuaged the sufferings of the respective days; but for three nights there had been nothing heard but the cry of the screech-owl, and the moon had been illuminating other lands. The period of her sacrifice was drawing nearer and nearer, and the cloud of her sorrow was gradually becoming deeper and darker.

"'Tis now three nights since he was in the wood," she said to Bertha. "My silence and inattention have but ill repaid his services and his passion. The sound of his lute has been to me the voice of hope breaking through the clouds of despair. O Bertha! my sense of duty to my parents and the honour of the old house of Roseallan has so nearly perished amidst this persecution, that I could now feel it

no crime to throw myself into his arms, and seek in humble worth the protection I cannot procure in the Castle of Roseallan's master."

"Wisely spoken, my bonny bairn," replied Bertha. "My auld blood boils wi' the passion o' youth, and drives frae my heart the gratitude I owe to the proud master and mistress o' Roseallan, as I witness this persecution o' the bonniest and the best o' Scotland's daughters. The arms o' George Templeton, the archer, the son o' the widow of Mosscairn, can send an arrow beyond the cast o' the best archer o' the Borders; and may weel defend (were he again in health) her for whom the proudest o' Scotland's knights would send the last shaft into the heart o' his rival."

"Is that the name of my preserver, Bertha?" ejaculated Matilda, in surprise. "How came you by your knowledge? Speak, and relieve me, that I may be certain that I know to whom I owe my life or my honour; and to whom I—unworthy, thankless, ungrateful being that I am!—have not yet vouchsafed one solitary look or word of thanks or gratitude. But what said you of his health? He was wounded for me—ha! Has adverse fate another evil in store for a daughter of affliction?"

"For your sake, my bairn, I traced out this man," replied the old nurse; "but, oh, that I should hae to add anither sorrow to the wo-worn child o' my early affection! He is ill. A wound he received in the wood has become, by ill treatment and exposure, the heart o' a fever that has eaten into the seat o' life."

"And he will die for me—killed by the second and severest wound, of ingratitude!" cried Matilda, starting up in violent emotion. "With death on him, received in my defence, has he nightly visited the bower of his ungrateful mistress, who never, even by the movement of her evening lamp, showed that she heard his strains, or understood their meaning. That countenance, streaming with blood, yet

beautiful through his life's stream flowing for me, will haunt me through the short span that misery may allow me. Would to God that I had returned one token as a mark of my gratitude, if not of my love! Bertha, I must see this man, who holds in his hands the issues of my destiny."

"And ye will, guid child," answered the nurse; "but, should death deprive ye o' this refuge, we may think o' some ither means o' savin ye frae this forced match wi' this high Catholic knight o' Haughhead, wha persecuted the reformers as muckle as he does his lovers. Sir Thomas Courtney—whom your father has banned frae Roseallan—shows as muckle mercy to the Catholics as he does fair-seeming love to his lass-lemans. But are you able to wander to Mosscairn, child?"

"A bleeding head did not keep him from my wood-bower," replied Matilda—"a bleeding heart shall not prevent me from seeing him before he dies."

This resolution on the part of Matilda, though it did not meet with the entire approbation of Bertha, was adhered to; but no opportunity occurred for putting it into execution. Every hour, in the meantime, added to her unhappiness. Sir George Douglas had returned to Edinburgh, to make preparations for the marriage; her mother watched her, to detect what she termed the trick of simulated illness; and her father, who was led by her mother, seemed determined to carry their cruel scheme into execution. Tortured throughout the day, the moon, now late in rising, afforded her no solace at night; the scene from the castle was changed from lightness to darkness; the screeching of night birds came, in the fitful blasts, in place of the melody of her lover's lute; and the dreary view called up by the power of association the picture of her lover lying on a death-bed, paying, by the torture of death, the dreadful penalty of having dared to love one above his degree.

After a suitable inspection, her mother had, as she thought, discovered that there existed no illness about her to prevent her from taking her usual airing, and Bertha, who had apparently some purpose in view, came and urged her to walk as far as the Monks' Mound, a green hillock that stood on the borders of the property of Roseallan. They accordingly set out. The day was not propitious; lazy clouds lay sleeping on the sides of the hills, and wreaths of mist floated along like shadows, assuming grotesque forms, and suggesting resemblances to aerial beings in the act of superintending the operations of mortals; the wind was hushed to the gentlest zephyr; and the sun, obscured by the masses of sleeping clouds, was not able even to indicate the part of the heavens where he was. Nature, "dowie and wae," seemed to have shrouded herself in the pall of mourning, and the feathered tribes, overcome by the instinctive sympathy, were mute, and cowered among the branches of the trees, as if they had borrowed the habits of the wingless, tuneless reptiles that crawled among the rank grass that covered the ground of the wood. The couple wandered along slowly, Matilda resting on the arm of the nurse. They came to the Monks' Mound, and sat down. The burying-ground of the monastery of Dominicans lay on their right hand, and they could see the tombstones rearing their grey, moss-covered heads over the turf-dyke that surrounded the consecrated ground.

"See ye the little thatched house at the foot o' Lincleugh Hill yonder?" said Bertha, after some moments of solemn silence, and holding out her shrivelled hand. "The smoke frae its auld lum is curling among the mist-clouds; but there's a darker mist within, and nae sun to send a flaught through it."

"I see it well," replied Matilda, in a melancholy voice; "and, humble as it is, and gloomy as it may be in its interior, I could even seek there the peace I cannot find in the

proud towers of Roseallan. There are no forced marriages under roofs of thatch."

"Ay, but there is death in the cottage as well as in the bonniest ha'," muttered Bertha, ominously.

Matilda looked into the face of her nurse, who continued to gaze in the direction of the cottage of Lincleugh.

"The mist blinds my auld een," she continued, as she passed her hand over her eyes. "The hour is come, and there should be tokens o' gathering there—yet I see naething."

Matilda looked again inquiringly into her face.

"Young een are sharp," said she again, "and now the mist is rowing awa frae the side o' Lincleugh, and breaking into wreaths in the valley. Look again, Matilda, and tell me what ye see."

"The removal of the mist," replied Matilda, directing her eyes to the cottage, "has revealed a cluster of people dressed in black standing round the door of the cottage."

"Ay, I'm right," replied Bertha, straining her eyes to see the mourners; "the hour is near; and see the sextons stand there in Death's Croft, like twa ghouls, looking into the grave they have this moment finished."

Matilda intuitively turned her eyes to the burying-ground that went under the name of Death's Croft.

"You seem to know something more of this funeral than we of the castle generally learn of the fate of the distant cottagers," said she.

"They're lifting," said the nurse, overlooking Matilda's remark, "and the train moves to Death's Croft.

'Round and round
The unseen hand
Turns the fate
O' mortal man:

A screich at birth,
A grane at even—
The flesh to earth,
The soul to heav'n.'"

"Who is dead?" asked Matilda, as she fixed her eyes on the procession.

Bertha was silent. The procession reached Death's Croft, and, in a short time, the rattling of the stones and earth on the coffin-lid was distinctly heard. Matilda shuddered as the hollow sounds met her ear, and Bertha crooned the lines of poetry she had already repeated. The rattling sound ceased, and the loud clap of the spade indicated the approaching termination of the work. The mourners gradually departed, and the sextons, having finished their work, returned to the monastery.

"Come, come, now," said Bertha, "we've seen aneugh—the flesh to earth, the soul to heaven. A's dune—let us return to Roseallan."

"The inhabitant of that narrow cell has the advantage of me," muttered Matilda, sadly, as she rose to return home. "The marriage with the Redeemer is not forced, and the union endureth for ever."

Bertha, who remained silent, hastened home, and, old as she was, several times outwalked her weak and melancholy companion. When they arrived, they went direct to the apartment of Matilda, where they were met by Lady Rollo, who congratulated her daughter upon her increasing ability to go through, with the necessary decorum, the ceremony of the marriage. As soon as she retired, Matilda flung herself on her couch, and burst into tears.

"There is only one individual who can save me from this dreadful fate," she cried. "Bertha, it is borne in upon my mind, that I cannot endure this trial. Death or madness will be the alternative doom of the forced bride of the knight of Haughhead. What of George Templeton? Did you not

promise to assist me to inquire for his health? Were we not to visit him when my strength permitted? Tell me, tell me—have you heard how he is?"

"He is weel, my bairn," replied Bertha; "better than either you or me."

"Bless you! bless you, dear Bertha!" cried Matilda, rising and flinging her arms round the neck of the old woman; "then there is some chance left for me. I may yet be saved from that dreadful doom. I would trust to the honour of that man who has already saved it with my life. Ah, if he is well, I may expect again to hear these dulcet sounds which thrill through my frame, and soften, by their sweet tones, the grief that sits like a relentless tyrant on my heart. When, Bertha, shall we visit him?"

"We hae already visited him," replied the nurse, with a strange meaning in her eye. "Did ye no see him this day, bairn, laid by the side o' his faither amang the saft mould o' Death's Croft?"

"What mean you, Bertha?" replied Matilda. "There is a strange light in your eye; I never before saw your face wear that expression. Ah! another doom impends over me —I see the opening cloud from which the thunder is to burst on my poor head. Why look thus upon me, nurse? is there a humour on your seriousness?—for you laugh not. Read the doom backwards, and do not incur from your Matilda the imputation of inflicting a cruel torture on her who has hung at your breast."

"It was to save pain to my beloved Matilda," replied the nurse, with a peculiar tone, "that I had ye hame before I told ye that the corpse ye this day saw laid in the grave, in Death's Croft, was that o' George Templeton."

Conscious of the effect that would be produced by this announcement, the old woman held out her arms to receive the falling maiden. With a loud scream she fainted, and forcing her way through the arms of the nurse, fell on the

floor with a loud crash. The sound brought up her mother. As Matilda recovered, she looked about her wildly; her eyes recoiling from the face of her mother, on which was depicted a smile of incredulity, and seeking Bertha's, on which she found an expression equally painful. There was no refuge on either side; and, as the image of her dead lover rose on her fancy, she felt, in the consciousness of the utter ruin of all her hopes, the stinging reproof of a tender conscience, that charged her with cruelty to the devoted being who, in defending her honour, lost his life.

"All this will not impose upon me, Matilda," said her mother. "Thou wert well to-day, when thou didst walk forth; and this well-acted fit is intended to remove the impression I entertain of your perfect ability to perform the engagement your father and I have made for your benefit. Mark me, maiden!—I will not heed thee more, if thy simulation were as well acted as that of the wise King of Utica." And, saying these words, she abruptly departed, leaving Matilda still scarcely sensible of what was going on around her. The cruel dame called the nurse after her, and the miserable girl was left to wrestle with her secret and divulged griefs with the unaided powers of a mind broken down by her accumulated misfortunes. She lay extended on her couch; and fancy, deriving new energies from the impulse of feeling, became busy in the portrayment of the form of her lover, whom she had, as she was satisfied, killed. She recurred to the scene in the bower, with his manly countenance streaming with blood; his visits to her bower afterwards—when he must have been suffering the first approaches of that disease that proved fatal to him; and, above all, her heartless conduct in not even condescending to notice this tribute of devotion in one who had saved her life.

She lay under the agony of these thoughts till it was after nightfall, when the gloom of her mind increased as the shades of darkness spread around her. She felt that she could

suffer the agonising thoughts no longer, and, starting up, and throwing over her shoulders a night-cloak, she hurried out of the castle. She found herself intuitively taking the way to Death's Croft. The night was getting dark, and there was a hollow, gousty wind blowing among the trees, and whistling among the whins and tall grass that lay in her path. Heedless of all obstructions, and insensible to danger, she wandered along, and soon found herself at the side of the turf-dyke that surrounded the place of the dead. Surmounting this slight obstacle, she groped her way among the tombstones, starting occasionally, as a gust of wind made the long grass rustle by her side, or produced a hollow sound from the reverberation of some hollow cenotaph. After considerable labour, she came to a new-made grave, and endeavoured to satisfy herself that there was not another equally new among the many *tumuli* that raised their green bosoms around her. On a stone at the foot of the grave she sat down, and wrapped the folds of the mantle round her, to keep from her tender frame the chill night-winds. She rose, and knelt down upon the new-made grave, the green sods of which she bedewed with her tears. The spot was doubly hallowed by recollections and self-criminations, and she could not, for a longer period than was consistent with her safety, drag herself away from it. Throwing herself on the grass in a paroxysm of grief, she kissed the sods, and, crying bitterly, rose, and mournfully sought the path that led to that home where a new misery awaited her. She wandered slowly along; and, as she approached the castle, saw with dismay a light shining in her chamber. Her mother, she concluded, was there, and would, by her absence, get all her suspicions fortified, that her illness was merely assumed. She stood for a moment, and paused, irresolute how to proceed—terrified to enter the house, yet unknowing whither to go. A voice struck her ear—it was that of Bertha; and, looking round, she saw her old nurse

in close conversation with a man who had on the very dress worn by the individual who formerly endeavoured to carry her off, and who, she suspected, was no other than Sir Thomas Courtney. What could this mean? Was it possible that Bertha was in the interest of the man who had attempted to force her affections, by retaining possession of her person? The question was an extraordinary one, and startled her. She stood and looked for a moment. The man observed her, and retreated, while Bertha stealthily sought the castle by a back entry. Her suspicion increased, and, hurrying home, she threw herself on a couch. She was thus beset on every hand. Her lover was dead, and in his grave, and all left behind seemed to be against her. There appeared to be no refuge from the fate that awaited her. The marriage-day was on the wing, and would soon cast the cloud of its dark pinion on the turrets of Roseallan. Her reliance on Bertha was changed to the poignant suspicion of treachery. Her mind recurred to the scene on the bridge, which she suspected was a part of her scheme to get her into the hands of the English reformer, whose tenets, she thought, Bertha secretly favoured. Thus had she lost both friend and lover—the one by death, the other by infidelity; and she could scarcely tell which was most painful to her—such is the anguish felt on the discovery of the falsehood of friendship. Her mother's cruel and unjust reproof rung in her ears; her father was obdurate; her lover proud, determined, and, worse than all, filled with what he called an ardent love, and which she looked upon as a loathing, ribald passion, the indications of which she would fly as she would the embrace of the twisting serpent. Pained to the inmost recesses of her spirits, she could get no relief from tears; her dry, glowing eyes looked unutterable anguish; and a feverish heat pervaded her system, rendering her restless and miserable. She flung herself on her bed, where she lay tortured by her conflicting thoughts. Her mother did not

again visit her, and Bertha remained absent, apparently from shame. A domestic obeyed her call, and administered the few necessaries she required. The night was passed in great anguish, and the morrow's light brought no assuagement of her pain. The domestic who waited upon her told her that Sir George Douglas had arrived at the castle with a party, and that her mother expected her presence in the hall next day. Bertha, she said, was indisposed, and could not attend her; but she would, in the meantime, supply her place. The day passed with no variation; there was no relief from the hope of succour; and her mind, dark and foreboding, sunk into a state of gloomy melancholy. The night came on, and threw the physical shades of gloom into a mind darkened with the misery of despair. As she lay in this state, she thought she heard the sound of a lute; and rising, she placed herself at the window. The night was still, and the moon, which had not for some time been visible, was sending forth faint beams before she set. The scene was composed and pleasant, and brought to her mind recollections that added to her griefs. She fixed her eye on the wood, and observed a figure passing between the trees. It was too indistinct to enable her to know who it was. A dark dress, unrelieved by any mixture of colours, suggested the idea of Bertha's friend, Sir Thomas Courtney. A new source of curiosity now arose in the individual playing (in, however, as she thought, a very indifferent manner) the tune that used to be played by her lover. The sounds went to her heart; but suspicion of treachery accompanied them, and fired her with as much anger as her gentle nature was capable of, against this new scheme to wile her from the castle. At this moment, her mother and father entered.

"We have got again, in the wood-bower, a lover," cried the father. "I insist, Matilda, that thou dost tell me who it is."

"I do not know, father," replied Matilda.

"Is it he with whom you attempted to elope that night when Bertha fell on the bridge?" asked the mother.

"I never attempted to elope," answered the maiden, weeping; "but I was attempted to be carried off by some one in disguise; and the man that is now in my bower may be he, but I know not."

"Sir Thomas Courtney!" cried the mother.

The father rushed out of the room. The sounds of voices were heard in the base-court, and that of George Douglas was pre-eminent. A shot was heard. Matilda looked out at the window, and saw some servants carrying the body of a wounded man across the bridge. Lights were brought, and some one called out the name of Templeton the archer. Matilda flew out of the room, and was in an instant in the ballium. She looked in the face of the wounded man. It was George Templeton. He opened his eyes, and fixed them on her face, took her hand into his, pressed it, sighed, and expired.

Some days afterwards, Matilda Rollo was led, dressed by the hands of her mother, into the presence of the priest who was to unite her and Sir George Douglas. When asked if she consented to receive the knight as her husband, she burst into a loud laugh. Her reason had fled; she was ever afterwards a maniac, and was tended by Bertha Maitland, who, sitting in the wood-bower, often contemplated, with feelings we will not attempt to describe, the unhappy victim of her treachery.

THE TWO SAILORS.

One dark and cloudy evening in September, two young men were seen walking on the road that winds so beautifully along the shore of the Solway, below the mouth of the Nith, between the quay and Caerlaverock. The summit of Criffel was hidden in clouds; the sky was dark and threatening; and the shrieking of the sea-fowl, and the whitening crests of the waves, as they broke before the freshening breeze, gave warning that a storm was at hand. At some distance, a two-masted boat, or wherry, as it is there called, lay on the beach, half afloat on the rising tide; and a boy sat on the green bank near, apparently watching her.

The two men appeared, by their dress, to be sailors. They were both in the prime of life, and remarkably handsome; but their countenances were of very different expressions. The one, whose short, crisp hair curled over a forehead embrowned by exposure to the elements, had the frank, bold, joyous look which we love to recognise as a characteristic of the class of men to which he belonged; the other, his superior in face and figure, as well as his senior in years, had a deep-set dark eye, whose very smile was ominous of the storm of evil passions and tempers within. Their conversation was loud and earnest, and was carried on in tones of considerable occasional excitement; the violent motion of their hands, and the increasing loudness of their voices, gave token that passion was beginning to usurp the throne of prudence; till at last the elder of the two, stung to madness by some observation of his companion, suddenly raised his hand, and struck him a blow on the head, which made him stagger for some paces. Quick

as lightning, however, he recovered himself, and rushed to avenge the blow. A short and violent struggle ensued; and then the younger, whom we shall call Richard Goldie, sat astride the prostrate body of his antagonist, panting with violent exertion, and with his knees pinioning the arms of the other to the ground; while the latter, exhausted with his exertions, made feeble and ineffectual struggles to rise.

"Let me rise," said he, at last, in a sullen tone; "you need not be afraid."

"Afraid!" replied the other, with a contemptuous laugh; "it wad ill set a born and bred Nithsdale man to fear a mongrel o' a foreigner. Rise up, man—rise up; ye brought it on yoursel. I wadna cared for yer sharp words, or yer ill tongue, had ye but keepit yer hans aff. But dinna look sae dour-like man. Ye needna be cast doun aboot it; it was a fair stand-up fecht, and ye did yer best. Come, gie's yer han, and we'll think nae mair o't?"

"Richie Goldie," said Cummin, rejecting the proffered hand, and drawing back, as if he thought its touch would be contamination, while his eye flashed with vindictive fire—"Richie Goldie, hear me. When we were boys at school together, you were like a serpent in my eyes. Since we left it, you have always crossed my path, like the east wind, to blight, and blast, and wither all the flowers that lay in it. You have stood between me and my love; and now you have struck me to the earth, and wounded me, when fallen, with your taunts and sarcasms. You have roused the slumbering devil within me, and before he sleeps again, you shall bitterly repent this day's work: you shall find the mongrel foreigner is no mongrel in his revenge!"

"Dinna talk that fearfu gate," said Goldie, laughing; "ye'll mak a body think ye're clean demented—speakin o' revenge, and lookin at a man as if ye wished yer een war daggers. I wish ye a better temper and a kinder heart. I fear neither you nor yer revenge; and as we *maun* gang this

trip thegither, just put yer revenge in yer pouch, and let's 'gree and be freends."

So saying, he sprang into the boat, which was now rocking in the tide, and rewarding the boy for his trouble, and followed in sullen silence by Cummin, he hauled aft the sheets, and in a few minutes the boat was dancing over the waves towards Annan.

It is now necessary that we should introduce the two heroes of our tale more particularly to the reader, which we will endeavour to do as concisely as possible. Edward Cummin's mother was an Italian, who had accompanied a family of rank to England in the capacity of lady's-maid. She was a beautiful woman, of warm and violent passions, and, for her station in life, remarkably well-informed and clever. Her mistress had a high opinion of her, and thought she was throwing herself away when she asked permission to marry her master's gardener; but, finding that her arguments to dissuade her from the connection were ineffectual, she gave her consent to it, and did all in her power to render her favourite's married state a comfortable one. For seven years the Cummins lived a happy and industrious life together—the only fruit of their union being a boy, the Edward of our story. He was an uncommonly handsome child, and was very much noticed by the family at the hall, from whom he received the rudiments of an excellent education, and acquired manners and habits superior to his station. He was the idol of his parents; but his father—a sensible, steady Scotchman—did not allow his partiality to blind him to his son's faults, and was firm and steady in his correction of them; while the mother, with foolish and mistaken fondness, endeavoured on all occasions to conceal his failings, and soothed and caressed, when she ought to have checked and punished him. The consequence was, that young Edward soon learned to fear his father, and to despise his mother—and dissimulation and hypocrisy were the natural con-

sequences of such contradictory management. At this time circumstances obliged the family to leave the hall, and settle on the Continent—the estate was sold, and Cummin, being deprived of his situation, returned, with his family, to his native place. Here their nearest neighbours were the Goldies; and a considerable degree of intimacy arose between the two families. The boys, Richard Goldie and Edward Cummin, were sent, during the winter months, to the same school, where a great deal of apparent friendship subsisted between them. But, on Edward's part, it was all seeming —for he was a hypocrite by nature, and, to suit his own purposes, could fawn, and cringe, and flatter, with an air, at the same time, of bold off-hand independence; and it was his interest to keep on good terms with Richard Goldie, who, though younger than himself, was more active and hardy, and who really *was*, what *he* pretended to be, courageous and independent. But, in his heart, Edward hated his high-spirited companion; it was gall and wormwood to his proud and vindictive spirit to notice the evident partiality shown towards Richard by his companions, and the coolness and avoidance evinced towards himself. Several circumstances at last transpired, which served to open Richard Goldie's eyes to the true character of his pretended friend; and a coolness arose between them, which, though it never proceeded to an open rupture, for some time put a stop to the closeness of their intimacy. Years passed, and the young men both adopted the sea for a profession, and sailed for some time together in the same vessel—an American trader, "hailing" from Dumfries. Here, as at school, though equally active in the performance of their duties, Richard Goldie's frank and generous disposition rendered him a favourite with the rest of the crew, while Cummin in vain strove to make himself popular—he always was, or fancied himself to be, an object of distrust and aversion. Towards Goldie he maintained the same apparently friendly and kindly

bearing, while he was storing up bitter feelings against him in his heart. It was strange that, with growing, though concealed, hatred on the one side, and with want of confidence on the other, these two young men should have continued to associate, and to keep up a companionship which it only depended upon themselves to discontinue; but so it was. They had learned from the same books; they had sported beneath the same roof; they had risen from boyhood to manhood together; and they could not, though so different in disposition, entirely sever the links with which early associations had bound them together. In the neighbourhood of Kelton lived an old fisherman, whose daughter was one of the loveliest girls in the district. Our two companions, being near neighbours of old Grey, were very constant in their attentions to him; they managed his boat for him, helped him to mend his nets, and made themselves useful in every possible way. Some of the neighbours insinuated, that all this kindness proceeded less from a regard for the old man, than from a wish to conciliate his pretty daughter. That, however, was matter of doubt; and old Grey took the "benefit of the doubt," and the compliment to himself. While flattering the father, however, they were both very assiduous in their attentions to the daughter, and each in turn fancied that he was the object of her exclusive regard. But Ellen Grey was as sensible as she was lovely, and had met with so much passing admiration, and knew so well what value to put upon it, that she was but little affected by this additional proof of her power. She liked both the young men as pleasant companions, but had, as yet, shown no decided partiality for either. She was perfectly well aware that they both admired her, and she was gratified by their attentions—as what pretty woman would not have been?—but the only use she made of her influence over them, was to restrain their angry passions, and to keep up friendly feelings between them. Of the two, Cummin was

the most calculated to please the eye and attract the fancy of a young and inexperienced girl; for, besides being more strikingly handsome than Goldie, in his intercourse with the softer sex he had successfully studied the art of concealing and glossing over all the worse qualities of his nature. Goldie, on the contrary, was frank and open to all alike; he was manly and independent in his address to females, and never stooped to flattery or dissimulation. Things went on in this uncertain way for some time, till the young men, wearied of sailing backwards and forwards to and from America, resolved to vary the scene, by making a voyage to India. Although they both felt that friendship was with them but a name, yet they had become so united by habit and early association, that they could not make up their minds to separate, and accordingly agreed to "enter" on board the same ship.

The evening on which our story commences, was the one fixed upon for their departure. Goldie had been to Annan the day previous, to ascertain the time of the steamboat's sailing from Liverpool, and had borrowed a boat from a friend of his father's there, in which he and Cummin were to return. They had passed the afternoon together at old Grey's, and Cummin fancied that Ellen smiled more kindly upon his rival than upon himself. She immediately, with the quickness of woman's tact, perceived, and endeavoured to remove, the impression—but in vain; and, in so doing, excited the jealous feelings of Goldie. They left the house in gloomy silence; but had not proceeded far before their irritated feelings found vent in words—few, and cautious, and half-suppressed at first, but gradually increasing in loudness, and energy, and bitterness, till the result was the struggle we have already described. Cummin's face, as he sat beside Goldie in the stern-sheets of the boat, was a true index to the black and vindictive passions that boiled within his heart. His glaring eye, set teeth, clenched hand, and

heavy breathing, told too plainly what was passing within. A child might have read his secret on his brow—and yet he was too great a coward to utter it. He sat brooding over his wrath, and nourishing dark thoughts of hatred and revenge against his unconscious companion, whose momentary anger had passed away, and left no trace behind it.

"Ye're as quiet's a sittin hen, Ned," said he; "I doot ye're hatchin mischief. Dinna tak on sae, man; let byganes be byganes, and think nae mair aboot it."

Cummin's first flush of rage had by this time passed away, and he began to think of the expediency of *appearing* to be reconciled to Goldie—for he knew that it was only by treachery and cunning he could hope to gratify his longing for revenge. He, therefore, in reply to Richard's speech, grasped him warmly by the hand, and said—

"Do not think so ill of me, Richard, as to suppose that I bear you any ill-will on account of what has passed. The words I uttered in my passion I am sorry for and disclaim, now that I am cool. I *was* angry—very angry, certainly; but that is past. How can you wonder that I am sad and silent, when you remember that we may never return to the 'bonny banks o' Nith.' We are going among strangers, and into strange lands: let us not forget our old friendship—let us always be friends as well as countrymen."

"That's said like a true Scot, at a' rates," replied Goldie. "What wi' yer English lingo and yer grand words, ye talk for a' the warld like a prented buik; it does a body's lugs guid to listen t'ye. Ay, 'shouther to shouther' is the word in the Highlands, and we'll tak it for *our* by-word." And the warm-hearted, generous lad shook him heartily by the hand.

Next day, they took their passage in the steamer for Liverpool, and from thence made the best of their way to London. There they were soon picked up by one of the "crimps," on the look-out for men for the outward-bound

Indiamen, and, in the course of a few days, were shipped on board the Briton—a vessel of twelve hundred tons. Here everything was strange to them, and they were subjected to a course of discipline to which they had not before been accustomed. They both proved themselves to be smart, active young fellows, and good seamen; but at first Cummin was a greater favourite than Goldie—for he was too cunning and timeserving to commit himself in any way; while the latter, always in the habit of speaking out his mind boldly and freely, frequently got himself into trouble by his forgetfulness of forms, and by the bluntness of his remarks. In a short time, however, they each appeared in their true colours, and the scale was turned in favour of Goldie, whose frank and open manners, and straightforward, fearless confidence, established him in the general good opinion of his officers and messmates; while, on the other hand, the mean cunning spirit of Cummin, becoming daily more apparent, rendered him an object of contempt and avoidance to the latter. This change in the opinion of his shipmates rankled deep in the heart of the vindictive Cummin; and, forgetting that he himself was the cause of it, he attributed all to the influence of the detested Goldie. A circumstance soon occurred which served to add fuel to the fire of evil passions that lay smouldering in his heart. The ship was within a few degrees of the equator, when one day a strange sail was seen ahead, which proved to be a "homeward-bounder." The captain immediately determined to board her, and gave his orders accordingly to the chief mate.

"Midshipman! tell the sailmaker to make a bag for the letters, and pass the word fore and aft that a bag is going to be made up for England. First cutters, clean themselves!"

The breeze was light, and gradually dying away; and, as the stranger was still at a considerable distance, orders were given to "pipe to dinner," and for the cutter's crew to come

up as soon as they had dined, to lower the boat down. In a short time, the coxswain of the boat—a fine, active, young north-country man—came up with three of his crew, two of whom were stationed at the tackle-fall, to lower the boat, while the coxswain, with the other man, jumped in, to be lowered down in her. One of the men at the "falls" was Cummin; lowering away, quickly and carelessly, he allowed the rope to run too quickly round the "cleat," and not being able to check it again, he was obliged to let go "by the run." The consequence was, that the stern of the boat was plunged into the water, while the bow hung suspended in the other tackle—the men were thrown out, and the poor coxswain, not being able to swim, made two or three ineffectual struggles, and sank to rise no more. The accident was so sudden and unexpected, and there was so little apparent danger—for the water was as smooth as a mill-pond, and the poor fellow was within arm's-length almost of the boat's gunwale—that he was gone almost before an alarm was given. The men were all below at dinner; but ill news flies fast—in a moment there was a rush to the hatchways, each hurrying to get on deck. Goldie was one of the first up, and, rushing aft on the poop, he exclaimed, "Where is he?" and, hardly waiting for an answer, sprung over the taffrail into the water, a height of twenty feet, and dived after the sinking man; but in vain—the poor fellow was gone beyond recall. The captain reprimanded Cummin severely for his carelessness, degraded him from his station as topman, made him a "sweeper," and stopped his allowance of grog. Goldie was publicly praised on the quarterdeck for his spirited conduct, and received a handsome present from the captain, besides being promoted t the station of boatswain's mate at the first opportunity. This was a bitter potion for the moody and jealous spirit of Cummin; and he brooded day and night over his fancied wrongs.

The ship was now rapidly approaching the "line," and the crew had been for some time anticipating with great glee the day of fun and license which was in store for them. The old stagers amused themselves with practising upon the credulity of those comparatively fresh-water sailors who had never been to the southward of the equator; and strange and mysterious were the notions which many of the latter formed of the dreaded "line," from the contradictory accounts they heard. Some imagined that it was a rope drawn across the sea, which could not be cut without the permission of the old king of the waves; others were gulled into the belief that there was a large tree growing out of the water, to which the ship was to be made fast, until the necessary ceremonies were gone through. But their doubts on the subject were soon to be changed into certainty. The officer of the deck one day made his report to the captain—

"The sun's up, sir."

"What is the latitude?"

"Fifty minutes north, sir."

"Very well—make it twelve o'clock."

"Strike eight-bells, quartermaster!" And away went the old fellow "forward," to strike the bell, brimful of the intelligence he had just overheard; and in two minutes it was known all over the ship, that, if the breeze held, they would cross the "line" before morning.

"There it is at last," muttered one of the middies, who had been for some minutes apparently straining his eyes through a three-foot "Dollond," and who, knowing he was within ear-shot of a knot of young cadets, *muttered* loud enough to be overheard.

"What is it?" said a young Irishman.

"The line, to be sure—the equinoxial line—which we have been so anxiously looking for."

In the meantime, great was the bustle among all the old

hands on board. Paint and tar were in constant requisition. A deputation had waited some days before upon the lady passengers, requesting from them some of their cast-off wearing apparel, as the crew expected "Mrs Neptune" to honour them with a visit in a few days, and wished to have a change of raiment in readiness for her, as she would most likely be wet and cold with her long cruise upon the water. A list had been drawn up, ready for presentation to Neptune, on his arrival, of all those who were for the first time crossing the line; and those of the passengers who were unwilling to undergo the ceremonies attendant upon being made "freemen of the line," had expressed their readiness to pay the customary exempting tribute, under the salutary dread of the razors, of three degrees of comparison, which were duly brandished before their eyes.

Towards evening, the breeze gradually decreased; the clouds were tinged with all the gorgeous hues of a tropical sunset, assuming every variety of strange and grotesque appearances; and the water reflected back their image, if possible, with increased splendour. As far as the eye could reach, nothing was visible but the glassy, undulating surface of the sea, partially rippled by the "cat's paws"* which played over it. The ship was gliding slowly over the smooth expanse of water—her large sails flapping heavily against the masts, as the sea rose and fell, and her smaller canvas just swelling in the breeze, and lending its feeble aid to urge her onwards; the passengers were taking their evening lounge on the poop and quarterdeck; while the ship's "band" were "discoursing eloquent music" for their amusement; and the crew were scattered in groups about the forecastle and waist. Just as the dusk of evening began to render objects obscure and indistinct, the *look-out* on the forecastle called out—

"A light right ahead, sir!"

* Light, partial airs.

"Very well, my boy; keep your eye upon it, and let me know if we near it."

In a short time the man exclaimed, "The light is close aboard of us, sir!" and, at the same moment, a bugle-note was heard, and a glimmering light appeared, which gradually enlarged, throwing a broad, blue, unearthly glare over the fore part of the ship, till the smallest rope was as visible as in broad daylight; while a loud, confused, roaring noise was heard, and a stentorian voice shouted, apparently from the sea—

"Ho! the ship, ahoy!"

"Holloa!" replied the officer.

"What ship is that?"

"The Honourable Company's ship Briton."

"Ah! my old friend, Captain Oakum!—welcome back again! I am too busy to come on board just now; but I will pay you a visit to-morrow forenoon. Be sure to have everything ready for me, for I have a great deal of work on my hands just now.—Good-night!"

"Good-night!"

Again the bugle-note was heard; and then the car of his watery majesty—looking to vulgar and unpoetic eyes very like a lighted tar-barrel—floated slowly astern, throwing a flickering glare over the sails, as it passed; while the "band" almost knocked down what little of the breeze was left with their counter-blast of "Rule Britannia," which they puffed away with all their might and main, till the car of Neptune sank beneath the sea.

"Come forward," said a middie to the cadets near him, just before the *car* dropped astern—"come *forward*, and see Neptune's car; it is worth your while to look at the old boy, whisking along at the tail of half-a-score of dolphins, with a poop-light as big as a full-moon blazing over his stern; you can see him quite plain from the forecastle." And away they all ran, helter-skelter, towards the forecastle—the

middie knowingly allowing the young aspirants for military distinction to get ahead of him, and bolting under the forecastle, while they ran thundering up the ladder. They had hardly reached the upper step, before a slight sprinkling from aloft made them look upwards; and, while they were gaping, open-mouthed, in wonder from whence the rain could proceed, as not a cloud was to be seen, they had soon reason to think that a waterspout had burst over their heads; for—splash, splash, splash—bucketful after bucketful of water was poured on their devoted heads from the "foretop." As soon as they recovered from the momentary shock and surprise, they made a precipitate retreat, amid roars of laughter from all parts of the ship, in which they were fain to join, to conceal their mortification.

All was now quiet for the night; the "band" had played "God save the King;" the watch had been called; and the captain's steward had announced, "Spirits on the table, sir."

"I had no idea, Captain Oakum," said one of the passengers at the "cuddy" table, "that Neptune was such a dashing blade, with his flourish of trumpets and car of flame. I shall feel a greater respect for him in future. Does he always announce his approach in such style?"

"No; he sometimes does it by deputy. Last voyage, I was walking the quarterdeck with some of my passengers, when we were all startled by seeing a figure, in white, come flying down out of the maintop. It fluttered its wings for a while, and then alighted on the deck, close before us; touched its hat, and delivered a letter into my hands; and then—whisk! before we had time to look round us, it was flying up into the mizzentop. The figure in white was one of the topmen—intended, I suppose, to represent Mercury; and the letter was from the King of the Sea, announcing his approach. The men had rove a couple of 'whips' from the

main and mizzen mast-heads, and the end of each being made fast round 'Mr Mercury's' waist, he was lowered from the one top, and 'run up' into the other."

"Capital! It must have been rather startling, in the dusk of evening, to see such a strange sea-bird alight at your feet."

The next morning, as soon as the decks were washed, preparations were made for the approaching ceremony. The jolly-boat was got in from the stern, and secured at the gangway, from which a long particoloured pole projected, announcing that this was "Neptune's free-and-easy shaving-shop." All the "scuppers" of the upper deck were stopped, and the pumps were kept in constant motion, till the lee-side of the deck was afloat, and the jolly-boat full to the "gunwale." An old sail was drawn across the fore-part of the ship's "waist," like the curtain of a theatre, to conceal the actors in the approaching ceremony, while making their necessary preparations. There was an air of bustling and eager mystery among all the old hands, which, to the uninitiated, gave rise to vague and unpleasant feelings of fear. It was in vain they strained their eyes to penetrate the mysteries of the sanctum concealed by the provoking curtain, from behind which sundry notes of preparation were heard, mixed with disjointed ejaculations—such as, "A touch more black, Jem." "How does my scraper sit?" "Where's my nose?"—and so on. All was bustle and animation; the carpenter's gang converting an old gun-carriage into a triumphal car; the gunner preparing flags for its decoration; his mates busy, with their paint-brushes, bedaubing the tars who were to act as sea-horses; and the charioteer preparing and fitting on Neptune's livery. At length all was ready for the reception of the King of the Sea.

"On deck there!" shouted the man at the masthead.

"Holloa!" replied the officer of the watch.

"A strange sail right ahead, sir."

"Very well, my boy. Can you make out what she is?"

"She looks small, sir—not bigger than a boat."

The officer made his report to the captain, who kindly entered into the spirit of the thing, to gratify the men, and desired to be informed when the boat was near the ship.

"We are nearing the boat fast, sir." And the captain made his appearance on deck, to reconnoitre the approaching stranger.

"Ship ahoy!" roared a voice ahead; "lay your maintopsail to the mast, and give us a rope for the boat."

"Forecastle there!—a rope for the boat! Let go the maintop bowline! Square away the mainyard, after-guard!" bawled the officer of the deck.

In the meantime, the unfortunates who had never crossed the line were driven below; the "gratings" were laid on fore and aft, and sentries were stationed at the hatchways to prevent escape.

A bugle-note was now heard murdering the "Conquering Hero," who soon made his appearance in person, over the bows, and stood for a moment in a *graceful* attitude on the night-head, where he really cut quite an imposing figure, with his robe of sheepskins and flowing beard of "oakum," and grasping in his extended hand a trident, with a fine fish on its prongs. A few minutes after he had descended into the "waist," the screen we before mentioned was withdrawn, and the procession moved on. First came the ship's musicians, fantastically dressed for the occasion, and playing "Rule Britannia" with all their might and main; next came the triumphal car, surmounted by a canopy decorated with flags of all nations, under which were seated Neptune, Amphitrite, or Mrs Nep, as Jack calls her, and a little triton; and immediately in the rear followed the *suite*, consisting of the barber, doctor, clerk, and about a dozen half-naked and particoloured demigods, who acted as water-bailiffs. Each of these gentlemen merits a particular description;

for they were all great men, in their way. The doctor wore an immense *floured* wig, and an uncommonly long, unwholesome-looking nose, and over all a rusty piece of tarpaulin, pinched into three corners, to represent a hat; under his arm he carried his family medicine-chest, the lid of which was open, and displayed to view pills and powders of all shapes, sizes, and colours, in great profusion; and in his hand he carried a large bottle, labelled, "Neptune's elixir." The barber carried, slung over his arm, his shaving-box (a large tar bucket), with brushes to correspond; the pouch in the front of his apron was filled with little etceteras, such as boxes of *grease* for the hair, *powder* for the teeth, &c.; and in his hand he brandished three razors, each about three feet long—one made of smooth iron hoop, the next about as genteel as a hand-saw, and the third, meant for particular favourites, with teeth grinning at each other, half-an inch apart, more or less. The clerk, or scribe, was a dandy of the first water: he had on a small rarée hat, which looked as if it had been forced up on one side by an immense crop of oakum curls, which sprouted most luxuriantly from under one of the rims. His whiskers were pointed to the wind with the greatest nicety; and from behind his ear peeped the quill, his badge of office; while a little inkstand dangled at his button-hole. The tips of his nose and ears were almost hidden by a most magnificently stiff collar, and his chin nestled in a bed of frill, made to match the collar of the best *foolscap*. All these *gentlemen* wore *long togs*.*

On came the pageant: Neptune's sheep-skins and trident looked very majestic; Amphitrite, a tall, high-cheek-boned Scotch "topman," with the assistance of a little red paint and oakum locks, and arrayed *cap-à-pie* in cabin finery, made a very passable representation of a she-monster; the barber brandished his razors; the scribe paraded his list,

* Coats.

and, every now and then, made use of an old frying-pan, with the bottom knocked out of it, for a quizzing-glass; the jack-*tars* who acted as sea-horses pranced as uncouthly as jack-*asses;* and the coachman, seated on the fore-part of the car, and proud of his livery and shoulder-knots, cracked his whip, d——d his horses for *lubbers,* and *singing out* to them, "Hard a-port!" contrived to *weather* the after hatchway, and then *bear up* round the "capstan," where, with a graceful pull-up of the reins, very much like a strong pull at the mainbrace, and an "Avast there!" to his obedient cattle, he stopped the car. The captain was standing under the poop-awning, in readiness to receive his majesty, who welcomed him most graciously to his dominions.

"Glad to see you once more, Captain Oakum," said he; "it warms the cockles of my heart to fall in with an old friend; and my wife here and I both wants comfort of some kind, after our long morning ride over the water; the cold air is apt to give one a cold in the stomach." The doctor immediately stepped forward with his bottle, and presented it to his majesty. "No, no," said he; "none of your doctor's stuff for *me;* keep that for my children; Captain Oakum knows my complaint of old."

The captain laughed, and his steward, taking the hint, produced a bottle containing a different kind of *elixir,* which old Neptune seemed to quaff with peculiar relish. A glass was then offered to Amphitrite, who pretended to reject it, and tried to blush—in vain.

"Come, come! none of that 'ere humbug, old gal," said the king; "tip it over; it'll do you good." And away it went, where many of its fellows had gone before.

"Ah!" said she, smacking her lips with unqueenlike gusto, "glorious stuff to drive out a cold!"

The whole of the suite were immediately seized with the same complaint, and all required the application of the same remedy.

"I understand, Captain Oakum, you have a good many of my children on board."

"Yes, a few. I hope you will treat them kindly."

"Oh, leave that to me, sir; I'll give none of them more nor they desarves."

He then thrust out his trident to the captain's steward, with a graceful air, as if he meant to impale him; but it was only for the purpose of presenting the fish on its prongs, as an addition to his honour the captain's dinner.

"I wish it war better; but we've had a sad sickly season down below, and all the dolphins and bonitos are on the doctor's list with influenzie."

During this interview, the men were all standing near the gangway, armed with buckets of water, wet swabs, &c., impatient for the commencement of the fun.

"But I must wish you good-morning, Captain Oakum; I have no time to lose. I have two or three other ships to board this morning."

"Good-morning!"

The band struck up "Off she goes." "Carry on, you lubbers!" said the coachman. Crack went the whip—off pranced the horses—and away whirled the car, which no sooner approached the gangway, than the procession was greeted with torrents of water, and his "godship" was half smothered in his own element. After gasping for breath, and shaking off the superfluous moisture, Neptune and the *fair* Amphitrite took their station on "the booms," to superintend the operations of the day. The clerk handed to his majesty a list of his new subjects, who were recommended to his peculiar attention.

"Richard Goldie is the first on the list," said Neptune; "send him up!" And away scampered the Tritons (or constables), who were naked to the waist, the upper parts of their bodies being hideously painted, fantastic-looking caps on their heads, and short painted staves in their hands.

The main-hatch "grating" was lifted, and up came our friend Richard, blindfolded, between two constables, laughing and joking with his captors as he came along. As soon as he made his appearance, Neptune exclaimed—

"Who have we got here? I ought to know the cut of that younker's jib. Ay, I'm blowed if it isn't the same that was cruising about the other day after a drowning shipmate. One of the right sort that. Just put my mark upon him—give him a touch of the tar-brush, and let him go."

Almost untouched, Richard was allowed to escape forward, where he immediately equipped himself with a wet "swab," and prepared to follow the example of those around him.

"Edward Cummin! Bring Edward Cummin!"

And Cummin made his appearance, escorted as Goldie had been, with a face almost as white as the handkerchief that blinded his eyes, and shivering with anticipation. The attendant Tritons seated him on the edge of the jolly-boat at the gangway; and the barber, turning to Neptune, and holding up his three razors, said—

"Please your honour, which?"

"Let us hear first what he has to say for himself," said Neptune.

"Where do ye come from?"

"From Scot——oo! oo!" said the poor fellow, as the barber thrust a well-filled tar-brush into his mouth.

"How long is it since you left it?"

But Cummin had gained experience; he set his teeth pressed his lips together, and sat, a ludicrous picture of fear, mixed with desperate resolution.

"A close Scot, I see," said Neptune; "give him some soap to soften his *fizz*, and teach him to open his mouth. Shave him clean.

The barber lathered his victim's cheeks with tar, which he *dabbed* on without much regard for his feelings; while

the Tritons, with their hands in his hair, *tugged* his head about in the proper direction. The operation was performed with the "favourite's" razor, which left the furrows of its *fine* edge upon his cheeks. The doctor was standing by with his vial of tar-water, and his box of indescribable pills, ready to take advantage of every involuntary gasp of the poor patient. At last, after daubing his hair with rancid grease, "to make it grow," the bandage was suddenly taken from his eyes, and he was thrown backward into the boat, and left floundering among the tarry water, till some charitable hand dragged him out. Half-drowned and half-blinded, Cummin staggered forwards, blessing his stars that his torments were over; but, alas! he soon found that he had escaped from the fangs of the torturing few, only to encounter the tender mercies of the vindictive many. Groans and hisses from all quarters gave token of the dislike in which he was held — bucketfuls of water were dashed in his face, and a rope drawn suddenly right across, tripped up his feet, and he floundered on the deck at the mercy of his tormentors, who, whenever he attempted to rise, dashed torrents of water upon him, and half-buried him in wet "swabs." Mad with rage and mortification, wearied and exhausted, Cummin at last reached the forecastle, where he sat down for awhile, to recover breath and strength.

"Come, Cummin, man," shouted Goldie to him—"come and join the sport."

There was something in Goldie's joyous and laughing tone which jarred upon Cummin's excited feelings—it seemed to him like an insult, that his companion should be so merry and happy, while he was sitting, like an evil spirit, scowling on the scene of mirth before him. He made no reply to Goldie, but muttered to himself—"Laugh on, my young cock of the walk; you shall pay dearly for your fun." From that day, Cummin became an altered man in manner; he

no longer attempted to conceal his dislike to Goldie, but on all occasions did his utmost to thwart and annoy him. He used to pace up and down the deck, in gloomy silence, while the rest of the crew were sleeping around him; and dark and deadly were the thoughts that crowded through his brain. He felt that he was disliked and avoided by all his companions, and, attributing their estrangement to the arts and influence of Goldie, over and over again did he vow bitter revenge against him. But how was his revenge to be gratified? There was the rub. He was too much of a coward to attack him openly, and feared to attempt any secret mischief, as he knew that he would be immediately suspected as the author of it; for his hatred to Goldie had, by this time, been remarked throughout the ship, where, it was equally obvious, Goldie had no other enemy. But, while he is meditating mischief, we must go on with our story.

When the Briton arrived in Madras Roads, several vessels were lying at anchor there; and one of them, a small merchantman, had her foretopsail loose, and "blue-peter" flying. This was the Columbine, a Liverpool ship, which was expected to sail that night about twelve o'clock. As Cummin stood on the forecastle in the evening, after the hammocks were piped down, looking gloomily at that vessel, his countenance suddenly brightened up. He rubbed his hands together, and laughed aloud; then checking himself, and looking cautiously round, to see whether any one was near him, he dived below. At midnight, the Columbine "got under way," and stood to sea.

Next morning, while washing decks, the officer of the deck called out, "Midshipman! I don't see Cummin; send him up."

"Cummin!—Richard Cummin!" was echoed round the decks; but no Richard Cummin appeared.

The hands were called out to muster; Cummin did not an-

swer to his name. Strict search was made for him, but he was nowhere to be found. The first and most natural conclusion was, that he had deserted to the Columbine; but it was too late now to ascertain. But that belief was a good deal shaken, when one of the men, who happened to have been awake at eleven o'clock the night before, said that he had heard a loud splash in the water, and ran immediately to the "port" to look out; but all was silent again; and, if it was, as he now supposed, Cummin, he must have gone down immediately. He did not give the alarm at the time, for he was half-asleep when he heard the noise, and thought he must have been mistaken. While the man was giving this evidence on the quarterdeck, up came Goldie with a piece of paper, which he had found on the pillow of his hammock, on which were scrawled the following words:—"Richie, I must put an end to this life of misery and mortification; when I am gone, perhaps you will think more kindly of me. I was wicked enough to talk of revenge. I leave my chest and all my traps to you. Be kind to my poor mother, for the sake of your unhappy shipmate." It was now evident to all that the poor fellow, whose dejection and reserve had been long noticed, had committed suicide; and, much as he was disliked, his disappearance cast a gloom over the ship's company for some days. Goldie grieved sincerely for him, now that he was gone—all his violence, all his tempers were forgotten, and Richard only thought of him as the friend of his boyhood, and the companion of his early days; and he was much affected by the kindly feeling manifested in his note.

We must now transport ourselves, for awhile, on board the Columbine, and follow Edward Cummin and his fortunes. On the night of the Briton's arrival in Madras Roads, Cummin, who was a capital swimmer, dropped unperceived under the bows of the Columbine, about an hour before she got "under way," and climbed into the "head'

by a rope that was hanging overboard. He passed the look-out on the forecastle; but the man, being half-asleep, took him for one of the ship's company. He then *dived* down the main-hatchway, and concealed himself in the "heart" of one of the cable-tiers, where he remained undiscovered during the day. Next night, when all was quiet, he stole up on the gundeck, and was in the act of helping himself out of one of the bread-bags there, when a man of the mess, who happened to be awake, seized him as a thief, and dragged him on the upper deck.

"Bring a light, quartermaster," said the mate; "let us see who this skulking thief is. Holloa!" continued he, starting back, with surprise, "who the deuce have we got here? Where did you spring from?"

"I came up from the cable-tier to get something to eat, sir; I was very hungry."

"Out of the cable-tier! But how did you get *into* the cable-tier?"

"I swam ——"

"Swam into the cable-tier! You must be a clever fellow. Come, none of your tricks upon travellers—tell the truth at once."

"I was going to tell you when you stopped me, sir. I am a 'Briton.'"

"Well, what has that to do with it?"

"Why, sir, I was tired of being one."

"Tired of being a Briton, and swam into the cable-tier! What do you mean?"

"Why, sir, that I was one of the crew of the Briton, the Indiaman that lay next you in the roads, and I cut and run from her, and got on board of you, just before you got under way."

"Here's a pretty business! But we must make the best of a bad bargain. I suppose you're one of the company's *hard ones*."

The Columbine was short-handed, having lost several men at Madras, and the captain, though he blustered a little when he first heard the story, was in his heart pleased to have got such an unexpected addition to his crew; and, after a short time, Cummin, behaving satisfactorily, was rated able seaman on the ship's books. On the Columbine's arrival at Liverpool, Cummin immediately set off homewards, and made his appearance at Kelton again, about eight months after he had left it, much to the surprise of his parents. He told a long and affecting story of his sufferings on board the Briton, and of the illness and death of poor Goldie, who had fallen a victim at sea, he said, to cholera. After the death of his friend, driven to desperation by the ill-usage he was exposed to, he determined to run from his ship on the first opportunity, and had accordingly deserted, as before stated. He spoke, on all occasions, in the warmest terms of Goldie's great kindness to him, and expressed the utmost regret at his loss. The sad news was a death-blow to the poor old Goldies, who never recovered from the effects of it, and who, broken-hearted and repining, fell easy victims, a few weeks afterwards, to an epidemic then raging. Ellen Grey mourned deeply and sincerely for Richard Goldie; she had always liked him as an agreeable companion, and respected him as an amiable and steady character; and though, at first, she had given the preference to the plausible Cummin, yet, before they parted, Richie's good qualities had so much gained upon her better sense, that she had begun to experience that kind of partiality towards him which might in time have ripened into a warmer feeling. With the quick eye of jealous rivalry, Cummin had noticed this change in her feelings, almost before she was conscious of it herself. He had never really loved her; his object in appearing to do so had been to annoy Goldie; but the wound thus given to his vanity had rankled in his heart, to the exclusion of

every other feeling but that of a wish to punish her for her defection.

He now renewed his intimacy with old Grey, and was doubly assiduous in his attentions towards him. He had become, apparently, quite an altered character—that is, he had become a more finished hypocrite; he had learned to calm his temper and to smooth his brow; and appeared, on all occasions, so steady and industrious, that the old man began to feel the kindest regard towards him, and pointed him out to his daughter's attention as a pattern for the young men around, and one who would make a steady and respectable husband. There was at first, however, a changeableness in his manner towards Ellen that puzzled and surprised her. At times, he was almost servilely obsequious in his attentions towards her; at others, when he thought himself unobserved, she was startled by the malevolent expression of his countenance, and by the derisive smile that played round his lips, as he gazed upon her. Cummin noticed the unfavourable impression he was making, and became more guarded in his behavour; he redoubled his attentions, and never allowed a shade of unpleasant feeling to be visible on his brow. His perseverance had the desired effect of reviving her old partiality, and in an evil hour she consented to become his wife. The morning after their wedding, he had disappeared, and had never since been heard of. A deserted bride, she was left in all the misery of uncertainty respecting his fate or his intentions, and in utter ignorance to what cause she could impute the cool contempt with which it appeared he had treated her from the moment of their union.

But we must return to our friend Richard Goldie. Nothing particular occurred during the remainder of the voyage of the Briton, until their arrival in China, where, in consequence of a dispute with the authorities, the ships were detained for several months, and a year elapsed before they

returned to England. As soon as he had received his pay, Richard set off for Liverpool, from whence he proceeded by steam to Annan. When his foot was fairly planted on the soil of Dumfries-shire, and his face was turned homewards, Richard could not restrain the exuberance of his spirits. He laughed, he sang, he ran, he waved his hat, and was guilty of all those extravagances which could only be excused in a young sailor just let loose; and which, had they been witnessed by others of a cooler temperament, would have been looked upon as the freaks of a madman. Then he began to think of Kelton, of his parents, and of bonny Ellen Grey; and with thoughts of her came a sad recollection of poor Cummin, and a kind of flattering notion that the latter had had good cause for his jealousy on the night of their quarrel, when Ellen, every feature of whose face and every note of whose voice were vividly present to his memory, smiled so sweetly upon him, and bid him take care of himself "for a' our sakes."

It was late in the evening when he approached Kelton, on his way homewards; and he resolved to give the Greys a call as he went past. At length he saw the well-known cottage, and a flush came over his brow when he recognised Ellen sitting at the door. He hastened forward to greet her; but, instead of the friendly reception he had anticipated, he was surprised and mortified to see her start up with a faint scream, and avert her eyes, with looks of horror and alarm.

"Ellen!" exclaimed he—"hae ye forgotten me? What gars ye turn awa yer head, as though ye'd seen a bogle? Am I sae changed, that ye dinna ken yer auld freend, Richie Goldie?" And he advanced to take her hand. The girl started from his touch, with a cold shudder, and muttered—

"Is it no gane yet?"

"What is't ye're speakin o', Ellen? There's nought here

but yersel and me? Can ye no speak to me? It sets ye ill to turn the cauld shouther to an auld freend."

The girl now looked at him for a moment fearfully over her shoulder, and exclaimed, with a start of joy—

"Oh! I believe it's himsel!"

"Why, wha else did ye tak me for, Ellen?"

"For yer wraith, Richie; they tell't me ye were dead

"And wha tell't ye sic a lee?"

"He tell't me sae himsel."

"And wha was he?"

"Ned Cummin: he said he saw ye dee."

"Ned Cummin! Why the lassie's head's in a creel. Ned drowned himsel, puir chiel! in Madras Roads; and mony a sair thocht has it gien me that we war unfreends when we parted."

"Weel, Richie, a' I ken is, that it's Gude's truth that Ned Cummin tell't me ye were dead—and I believed him." And the tears gushed from her eyes as she said so. "But come ben the hoose, and see my faither."

Old Grey was at first as much alarmed as his daughter at the apparition, as he thought it, of Richard Goldie; for they both were infected with the superstition of the country, and firmly believed in the doctrine of wraiths, bogles, and other supernatural appearances.

"And, noo," said the old man, "that we ken that ye're yersel, and no yer wraith, sit doun and tell us a' that's happened ye sin ye gaed awa."

"I hae nae time 'enow," said Richard; "I maun awa hame; for I haena seen my ain folk yet—mair's the shame; but I'll come back the morn's morn, and gie ye my cracks."

"But Richie, my man, hae ye no heard—d'ye no ken?" said the old man, hesitatingly.

"What's happened?" cried Goldie, alarmed. "Are they no a' weel at hame?"

"They heard ye were dead, Richie: and ye ken, they

aye said that ye war the life o' their hearts—they were never like the same folk again; the grass o' Caerlav'rock kirk-yard is green abune their heads."

Goldie was staggered by this unexpected and distressing intelligence; he had loved his parents with the fondest affection, and the hope of cheering and supporting them in their declining years had been the mainspring of his activity and industry. He covered his face with his hands, and remained for some moments silent; and at last, with a sudden outburst of grief, exclaimed—

"Gane! baith gane! and I am left alane without a leevin freend, or a roof to shelter me!"

"Yese no want either, Richie, as lang's I'm to the fore. Come, bide whar ye are; ye'll aye be welcome for the sake o' langsyne. I hae aften wished, and I ance thocht, that oor Ellen and you micht come thegither; but it wasna to be."

"And what for can it no be?" said Richie, forgetting his recent loss for the moment, and looking at Ellen. But she burst into tears, and left the room.

Goldie, surprised at her emotion, asked the reason of it; and the old man, in explanation, told him the story we have already related, and expressed his surprise at Cummin's conduct, and his wonder as to what could be his motive for such deception.

"What for did he tell us ye were dead, Richie?"

"I see it a' noo," said Richard: "when I struck him to the ground, he swore he would hae revenge—and sair revenge has he taen. My puir faither and mither! What had they dune?" And the poor fellow hung down his head, and sobbed aloud.

"But what could hae garred him leave our Ellen?"

"Oh, he kent that I liked Ellen, and jaloused that she thocht mair o' me than o' himsel; and he just married her to spite me, and to be revenged upon her for slighting him

at first. But there's a time for a' things; if I get a grip on him, he's repent it."

It was long before Goldie was able to bear up against the disappointment of all his fondest hopes; and when the first violence of his grief was past, the springiness and buoyancy of his disposition seemed to have left him entirely. He became grave and thoughtful, a smile was scarcely ever seen to brighten his countenance, and he went about his usual occupations with a sort of dogged indifference, as if it mattered not to him how they were performed, and as if they were to him a mere mechanical and tiresome duty. Yet he loved Ellen Grey as fondly as ever; but she was now, though deserted, the wife of another, and he assumed a coldness of manner, to conceal the warm feelings which still reigned but too powerfully in his breast. He was *reserved*, because he felt a kind of painful pleasure in brooding in silence over his sorrows. In thinking of his poor parents, and of Ellen Grey, who might have been his wife but for another, he would mutter threats of retaliation upon the cold-blooded villain who had caused him so much misery. He would fain have left a place which, much as he loved it, only kept awake so many painful recollections, had he not been withheld from doing so by a strong feeling of gratitude to old Grey, who was now unable to work for his own subsistence, and depended almost entirely upon him for his daily support. Ellen herself, who was much liked in the neighbourhood, and whose story had excited much interest among the neighbouring gentry, obtained a good deal of employment as a dressmaker, which enabled her not only to assist in the support of her father, but likewise to procure many luxuries for him which he otherwise could not have obtained. At length, after lingering for some months in a state of gradual decay, the old man died, and Goldie, after having seen Ellen comfortably settled in a neighbouring family, took an affectionate farewell of her, and went to

Liverpool in search of employment. No accounts had been heard of Cummin, although nearly two years had elapsed since his disappearance; and Goldie, who could not forget his love for Ellen Grey, was kept in a state of most unpleasant uncertainty.

Richard had been for a short time in Liverpool, and was walking one day on the Clarence Dock, as some carts were being unloaded. The horse in one of them took fright at some passing object, and dashed off at full speed. A sailor, who was standing on the dock, ran forward and attempted to stop it; but was instantly knocked down with great violence, and the wheel of the cart passed over his head. Richard, who was close to the spot, hastened to his assistance; and was horrified at the sight that met his eyes. The poor fellow was senseless; his arm appeared to be broken, and his face, dreadfully disfigured, was covered with gore and dust. Richard raised his head on a log of wood lying near, loosened his collar, and, a crowd instantly collecting, requested some of them to run for the nearest doctor. He then, with the assistance of some of the bystanders, conveyed the poor sufferer into one of the houses near, where he lay for some time panting and groaning; but apparently quite insensible.

After they had all gone, the wounded man turned to Richard, and, looking in his face, gave a heavy sigh.

"Are ye in much pain?" said Goldie.

"Pain of mind more than pain of body, Richard Goldie," replied the man, in feeble and imperfect accents. "Do you not know me?"

"Mercifu powers!" exclaimed Richie; "sure it canna be Ned Cummin?"

"It *is* Edward Cummin, Richie, your false friend, your once bitter enemy, that lies bruised, and crushed, and broken-spirited before you. Can you forgive me?—can you forgive a dying and a penitent man?"

"Ned Cummin," said Richard, "ye hae dune me grievous wrang; but I forgie ye wi' a' my heart."

"Thanks, dear Richie!—this is more than I deserved. Now I shall die happy."

"Speak nae mair, Ned; ye heard what the doctor said."

"But I *must* speak, Richie, while time is mine. Oh, that a few years were allowed me, to prove my repentance sincere! But I feel that is not to be. Death is before me, Richie, and I see things in a very different light now. You were always better than me; you were frank, and open, and confiding; I was a proud, revengeful hypocrite, and I hated you because I always *felt* myself to be one when you were near me. When you struck me to the earth, the feeling of revenge was aroused within me; but it was long before I could contrive how to gratify it. At last I thought of Ellen Grey; I knew you loved her, and I fancied she had deserted me for you; I determined to be revenged upon you both. I wooed and won, and then deserted her. But the terrors of an accusing conscience went with me, and I had resolved to return homewards, when the accident occurred. Richard, I am dying! Cruel and revengeful as I have been, can you still forgive me?"

"I do, I do, from my heart," sobbed Richard.

"Bless you for saying so! Now leave me to my own thoughts, that I may make my peace with Heaven."

Next morning Edward Cummin was no more. Goldie was with him in his last moments, and was gratified by the conviction that he departed in a happy frame of mind. After having attended the remains to their last home, he gave up his intention of going abroad, and turned his steps homeward. Having arrived, he sought Ellen, and communicated to her the sad news. His love for her was as strong as ever; and all obstacles to their union having been removed, they were soon afterwards wedded—a union very different from the former marriage into which Ellen had been betrayed.

THE DREAM.

The war of reason against the prejudices of superstition has been a long one. It followed on the heels of the crusades of superstition against reason. How different the spirit, tactics, and results of the two! Cruelty, injustice, blood, the burning stake, and an *increase* of the strength of the persecuted, on the one side; on the other, argument, persuasion, and, at the worst, a harmless satire, with the almost *total extinction* of the cowardly foe, who, having no refuge but in the dark recesses of ignorance, required only to be brought to light to suffer extermination. Auguries and divinations ruled the world for two thousand years, and were put an end to by the Christian faith, which left untouched the power of witches, ghosts, and dreams. The first of these, notwithstanding all the probation of King James, have perished; the second, maugre the arguments of Johnson, have left this earth; but the third, which has had a thousand supporters between Artemant Milesius and Lord Monboddo, still retain some authority in the world. We support them not; but we subscribe to the opinion of Peter Bayle, who stated, in reference to the reality of the dream of the Spanish Jesuit, Maldonat, there are many things appertaining to dreams which have troubled and perplexed strong spirits more than they have been ever willing to confess. We are now to add one instance more to those of which the same author has said the world is almost already full; but we again protest against the inference of our own belief in oneirology.

About half-way between the towns of Hamilton and Glasgow, there stand, at the distance of about a quarter-of-a-mile from the highway, and on the left as you approach the

latter place, the remains of what was once a small farmhouse. It is now long since the last inhabitant left this little humble domicile, whose handful of ruins would perhaps excite but little attention from the passer-by, were they not so delightfully and conspicuously situated. They stand on the very extremity and summit of a beautiful green promontory, of considerable height, that projects into and overlooks a lovely strath, skirted with wood, and through which winds one of the prettiest and best trouting streams in Scotland. The situation, therefore, of these humble ruins invests them with an interest which would by no means attach to them, were they situated in a less romantic locality.

Of the farmhouse of which we speak there now remain only one of the gables and a portion of the side-walls; but, if your curiosity tempt you to further investigation, you may still trace the limits of the little *kail-yard*, which lay immediately behind it; and, struggling for an obscure existence with the rude bramble, which has now usurped the place of the homely but civilised vegetation of the little garden, may be seen a solitary rose, the last and almost only trace of its former cultivation. The little garden, in short, is now all but obliterated, and can only be distinguished by the low irregular green mound—once its wall—that forms the boundary of its limits.

There is nothing in all this, perhaps, to excite any particular interest; for we have rarely any sympathy for the humble and the lowly. In the case of such vestiges of bygone days as those alluded to, it is only the ruined castle, the half-filled moat, and the crumbling walls of mighty masonry, that excite our curiosity, and set our imagination to work—not the handful of loose stones that once formed the cottage of the obscure peasant, not the little rudely-cultivated patch that formed his Eden. These are by far too commonplace and too undignified to attract a moment's notice, or to excite

a moment's interest. Yet the cottage has its tale as well as the castle, as we will presently show.

About the year 1760, the farmhouse of which we have spoken was inhabited by John Edmonstone—a man of excellent character, and who, humble as his station was, had contrived, in the course of a long life of industry and economy, to scrape together a very considerable sum of money, besides a good deal of property invested in stock, such as cattle, grain, farming implements, &c. The former —namely, the cash—according to the good old custom of Scotland, amongst John's class, was stowed into a stocking-foot, which again was stowed into a certain hole in the wall, known only to the members of the family. But, ignoble and odd as this depository may seem, it yet contained no inconsiderable treasure, and that not a whit the worse or less valuable for the homeliness of its abode. In one end of the stocking aforesaid was a bulbous swelling, as large as a well-sized fist. This contained a tempting store of bright and shining guineas, to the number of about, perhaps, 250. These being at once confined and secured by a string tightly tied round the stocking, produced the appearance above alluded to. Next followed, but in the same general depository—namely, the stocking—a huge conglomeration of crowns, half-crowns, and shillings, to the amount of about £50 more, which were also secured by a tight ligature—thus giving, if there had been another link or two to the stocking, something the appearance of a string of sausages.

At the period of our story, John Edmonstone was a widower, with two daughters—the one, at this time, about twenty, the other some four or five years older. They were both unmarried, and lived with their father. Jane Edmonstone, the younger of the two, was a very pretty and interesting-looking girl. Her sister Mary did not possess such striking personal advantages; but this was amply compensated by a pleasant manner and a kind and gentle dis-

position. For many years these relatives lived happily together, in their little, lonely cottage at Brachead. They led a sober, industrious, and pious life; for, duly as the evening came round, the "big ha' Bible" was placed on the kitchen-table, and, by the light of a clean and well-trimmed lamp, aided by the blaze of a cheerful fire, John read aloud to his daughters from the sacred page. But the best regulated life must have an end, as well as the most reckless and abandoned. John was suddenly seized with a mortal illness, of which he shortly died, leaving his two daughters sole and equal inheritors of his wealth. The death of their father was a grievous calamity to the two unprotected girls; for they were without relatives—at least, there were none near them—though certainly not without those who wished them well, as they were universally respected in their own neighbourhood, both on their father's account and their own. Yet did they feel, on the death of their only parent, a sense of loneliness and of inability to cope with the world, which at once alarmed and dispirited them, notwithstanding the considerable resources which their father's industry and economy had secured to them. Nor did their local situation tend to lessen the former feeling; for it was a solitary one—the house in which they lived being at a considerable distance from any other habitation. The neighbourhood in which they resided, moreover, was a loose one. It was filled with coal-miners and coal-carters—the latter, in particular, a brutal, ruffian race; and to all these the poor solitary women believed it to be well known, as it certainly was to a great many of them, that their father had left them money, and that it was in the house; and thus, to their other fears, was added the dread of their dwelling being broken into, and themselves robbed and murdered.

It was while living in this state of feverish alarm and utter helplessness—for they found they could not conduct the business of the farm—and about a fortnight after the

death of their father, that Jane, the youngest of the sisters, suddenly awoke, early in the morning, from a troubled sleep, and sprang from her bed, in an agony of terror and affright, exclaiming, as she hurried on her clothes—

"O Mary, Mary! we'll stay here no longer. Not another day—not another day. I'll go into Glasgow this forenoon, and consult with our uncle about selling off, and removing into the city. We will not stay here, Mary, to be robbed and murdered."

"I am as uneasy remaining here as you can be, Jane," replied her sister, now more than ever alarmed by the latter's wild looks and unusual excitement; "but what is the meaning of this sudden outcry?"

"It does not matter, it does not matter, Mary," said Jane, in great agitation, and still hurrying on her clothes; "but I'll go this day to Glasgow, and consult our uncle." And, without vouchsafing any explanation of the cause of this sudden determination, so peremptorily expressed, she shortly afterwards took a hasty breakfast, and, in a few minutes more, was on the road to Glasgow, a distance of from four to five miles.

The uncle whom Jane proposed to consult on this occasion was a brother of her mother's, named James Davidson. He was in poor circumstances, and had been so all his life; and, whether from this or some other cause, he had never stood high in the favour of his brother-in-law. He was a hard-featured old man, stern and morose, and without any of that patient forbearance of disposition and manner which gives to age so pleasing and amiable a character. Davidson, as we have said, was poor. He had never been able to improve his circumstances, or to rise above the condition of a labourer. There he started, and there he was still. Nor did his eldest son promise to be more fortunate in the world. He inherited his father's disposition, which was an unhappy one; was idly inclined; and, somehow or other, could never

gain the good-will of any one. Neither Jane nor Mary Edmonstone had ever seen much of their uncle; their father's dislike to him prevented this. Neither did they know much about his circumstances or character; the same cause preventing all intercourse between the families. They, in short, only knew of their uncle's existence by his frequent applications to their father for the loan of money, which he invariably refused. Still, he was their uncle, and the nearest relative they had, and, in their present circumstances, they naturally looked on him as the fittest person to consult regarding their affairs, their wishes and intentions. These Jane now laid before the old man, who received her kindly, notwithstanding his usual asperity of manner; telling him, at the same time, that she and her sister were resolved, at all hazards, and at whatever loss, to sell off at Braehead, and take up their residence in Glasgow; "for," said she, "we are day and night in danger of our lives yonder; and besides, we are wholly unable to conduct our father's business—buying and selling cattle—or to carry on the affairs of the farm. These are things that we cannot do—and neither need we, as we have enough to live upon without it. All that we want is safety."

The old man heard her patiently, and it was some time before he made any reply. At length he said—

"Yes, enough to live upon, I daresay you have. How much did your father leave, Jane?—in money, I mean."

"Somewhat about three hundred pounds," replied his niece.

"A good round sum," said the old man, "to be all in hard money. And is it all past you—all in the house?"

"All."

Davidson thought for a moment. Then—"Well, I'll tell you what it is, Jane," he said: "I do not at all approve of your leaving Braehead. If you do so, you throw yourselves at once upon your little capital, which will not last you

very long in a town like this, where all would be going out, and nothing coming in—and where would you be when it was exhausted? Now, your byres and farm in the country are a certain source of emolument to you; and, by keeping these, you will make a decent maintenance of it, without encroaching on the funds left you by your father. My advice to you, then, Jane, is, by all means to remain where you are. Hire persons to do your heavy out-of-door work; and, as the distance is not great, I will come out myself once or twice a-week, and assist you with both my personal services and advice."

"Thank you, uncle," replied his niece; "but we really cannot remain at Braehead, on any account. I would not remain in it another week for any consideration."

"No! what for, Jane? What are you afraid of?" said her uncle.

"Of being murdered," replied Jane; "and I have but too good reason to fear it."

"Nonsense, Jane. Who would murder you? What ridiculous fears are these?"

"But I have a reason, though, for fearing it, uncle," replied his niece, with emphasis.

"Reason!—what reason can you have but your own idle and absurd fears?"

"Yet I have, though, uncle," said Jane, pertinaciously, but appearing somewhat confused and embarrassed.

"What do you mean, girl?" said her uncle, fixing his keen grey eye upon her countenance scrutinisingly; for he observed her embarrassment. "What *is* this reason of yours for so unreasonable a fear?"

"Well, uncle, I'll tell you what it is at once," replied Jane: "I had a most frightful dream last night. I dreamed that a soldier—a tall, fierce-looking man—broke into our house in the middle of the night, with a drawn bayonet in his hand; that he murdered my sister before my eyes—I

saw her blood streaming on the floor; and that, having done this, he seized me by the hair of the head, and was about to plunge his bayonet into my heart, when I awoke. It was a horrible dream, uncle, and has made such an impression on me—it was so fearfully true—that I cannot think of abiding longer in the house. It was this frightful dream that urged me in to see you to-day. I have not told my sister of it; for it would put her distracted."

Jane's uncle listened patiently, but with a smile of contemptuous incredulity, to the strange dream of his niece; and when she had done—

"Pho, pho! what stuff!" he said—"what absurd stuff! How can you be so silly, girl, as even to speak seriously, let alone putting any faith in such nonsense as this?"

"I cannot help it," interrupted Jane.

"Well, well—perhaps you cannot," continued Davidson; "but it is not the less ridiculous for that; and, if it were known, it would certainly get you laughed at. Pay no attention to such trash, Jane. Think no more of it; but return to Braehead, and proceed with your usual occupations, and I will come out in a day or two, to see how you get on."

To this he added the advice which he had already given, and in nearly the same words, but in vain. Nothing could drive the girl from her purpose—from her determination to leave Braehead. Finding this—

"Well, then," said her uncle, "at least remain where you are for a day or two, when I will come out and assist you in your arrangements, and in the disposal of your effects; you cannot manage these matters yourselves."

To this proposal Jane yielded a reluctant consent, but repeated her determination to leave the place as soon as possible, and to come into Glasgow to reside.

On this understanding, then—namely, that Jane and her sister should remain at Braehead until their uncle came out—the former returned home, when she told Mary of all that

had passed, excepting what related to her dream, to which, for the reason she had herself assigned, she carefully avoided all allusion. By a very strange coincidence, however—but, though strange, by no means unprecedented—the considerate caution of Jane, in the particular just spoken of, was soon after rendered unavailing. On the very next morning, the elder sister awoke, in an exactly similar state of perturbation with that in which Jane had arisen on that preceding, exclaiming—

"O Jane, Jane! I have had a frightful dream!"

"What was it, Mary?" inquired her sister, in great alarm, recollecting her own frightful vision.

"O Jane!" replied the former, still trembling with terror, "I dreamed that a person in the dress of a soldier broke in at our back-window, and murdered us both. O God! it was horrible! I think I see you on the floor there, struggling with your murderer, who held a naked dagger in his hand, with which he had already stabbed you in several places."

"Gracious God protect us!" exclaimed Jane, leaping to the floor, in a state of alarm exceeding even that of her sister. "This is dreadful! Oh, these are fearful warnings! It can no longer be doubted—it can no longer be doubted! O Mary, Mary! I dreamed precisely the same thing last night; and it was that, though I did not tell you, that hurried me in to our uncle yesterday. I told him of my dream; but he treated it with contempt. He will surely now acknowledge that it is a warning not to be slighted."

We need not interrupt our narrative at this point, by stopping to describe further Jane's feelings on hearing of this strange and appalling repetition of her own frightful vision. These feelings were dreadful. She grew pale as death, and shook like an aspen leaf. On their first terrors subsiding a little, the two sisters began to consult as to what they should do, to avoid the horrible fate with which they

now had no doubt they were threatened; and finally resolved that, if their uncle did not appear on that day—or, indeed, whether he appeared or not—they would, on the next, remove to Glasgow, taking with them all their ready money, and whatever other things they could conveniently remove, and leave the rest, for a time, under the charge of a neighbouring farmer, who had been an intimate friend of their father's. They, in short, resolved that, in any event, they would remain only one other night at Braehead.

Before proceeding further with our story, we would beg the reader to observe, that the circumstances we are now relating occurred in the year 1760, in the month of January. It was a winter of great severity, and remarkable for the amazing quantity of snow that fell; but one of the wildest days of that wild season was the 21st day of the month above named. It was the same day in which the scene between the two sisters which we have just related occurred.

The storm, bearing huge drifts of snow on its wings, which had been raging all day, increased as night approached; and, when darkness had fallen upon the earth, it became tremendous. The trees around the little cottage of Braehead bent before the wind like willow wands; and loud and wild, nay, even appalling, was the rushing sound of the storm amongst the leafless branches. The snow, too, was whirling all around, in immense dense masses, and overwhelming every object whose height they surpassed in their cumbrous layers of white. It was in truth a fearful night, and such a one as no person long exposed to it could possibly have survived. Dreadful in particular to the lonely traveller, who was seeking a distant refuge, and whose urgencies required that he should do battle with the storm; and many a harrowing tale was afterwards told of the shepherd and wayfarer who had perished in the terrible night of the 21st of January, 1760.

While the tempest is thus howling about the little lonely cottage of Brachead, and the huge wreaths of snow are blocking up door and window, what are its two solitary inmates about? There they are, the two unprotected women —all their previous fears increased tenfold by the awful sounds without, and their sense of loneliness and helplessness deepened into unendurable intensity. There they are, we say, sitting by their fire, pale and trembling, one on each side of the chimney—for they are afraid to go to bed—listening in silent awe to the raging of the storm.

It was only at long intervals that the two sisters exchanged words on this dreary night, and then it was little more than a brief exclamation or remark, excited by some sudden and violent gust that swept over their little cottage, or roared amongst the trees with a fury exceeding the general tenor of the storm. To bed they could not think of going. They therefore continued by the fire, where they sat almost without moving for many hours.

It was now late, perhaps about twelve o'clock, and the storm was at its height, when the fears of the two lonely sisters were suddenly wrought up to a horrible climax, by a loud rapping at the door, which, again, was instantly followed by the sound of a voice imploring admittance. In the first moment of alarm, the women leaped from their seats and flew to different corners of the apartment, screaming hideously, having no doubt that their fatal dream was now about to be realised. From this terror, however, they were gradually in some measure relieved by the supplicatory language and tones of the person seeking admittance.

"For God's sake, open the door!" he said—for it was the voice of a man—"or I must perish. I have already travelled fifteen miles in the storm, and am now so benumbed and exhausted that I cannot move another step. Open the door, I say, if you have the smallest spark of humanity in you, and give me shelter till daylight."

Somewhat reassured by these appeals, which had in them so little of a hostile character, and to which circumstances gave so truthful a complexion, Jane, the younger of the two sisters, asked the elder, in a low voice, what they should do. "Shall we admit him?" she said; "for it really seems to be a person in distress, and it would be cruel to refuse him shelter in such a night as this. We could never forgive ourselves, Mary, if the poor man should perish in the storm."

"It is true, Jane," replied her sister—"we could not indeed. We will admit him, and trust the result to God. He will not allow a deed of charity and benevolence to be turned into an instrument of crime." Saying this, Mary approached the door, and, placing her hand on the bar, put one other query ere she undid it. "Are you," she said, addressing the person without—"are you really in the situation you represent yourself to be?"

"Before God, I am!" replied the voice from without, emphatically. "Admit me for heaven's sake! You have nothing to fear from me."

In the next instant the bolt was withdrawn, the door flew open, and in walked a man in the garb of a soldier. The brass plate on his cap glittered in the light of the lamp held by the younger sister, who stood at some distance from the door, and from beneath the greatcoat he wore peeped the dreaded red livery of the king. One fearful and simultaneous shriek from the sisters, as they fled frantically into the interior of the house, told of this horrid realisation of their dreams. The soldier, in the meantime, walked into the kitchen; but any one who should at this instant have marked his countenance, would have seen very little in it to indicate the fell purpose for which there seemed good reason to fear he had come. He was, in truth, a young, handsome, and singularly good-looking man, with a face expressive of great good-nature and mildness of disposition. Little regarding these indications of a character

so different from that which occupied their minds, the sisters continued to express their horror and alarm in wild shrieks, and in the most piteous appeals for mercy. On their bent knees they implored it; offering all they had, if their lives were only spared. The soldier, benumbed and exhausted though he was, seemed to forget his own sufferings in contemplating what he appeared to consider as a most extraordinary and unaccountable scene—the terrified sisters on their knees, imploring his mercy.

"Good women," he at length said, "what is the meaning of this? What are you afraid of? Is there anything in my appearance so dreadful as to excite this extraordinary alarm? If there be, I never knew it before; and am very sorry to find it out now. I am sure I intend you no harm—none in the world. God forbid I should! I am but too grateful to you for having opened your door to me; and but too happy to get near this cheerful fire."

Again somewhat calmed by these friendly expressions, so different from what they had expected, the sisters ceased their frantic cries for mercy; and, though yet far from being reconciled to their tremendous visiter, they became a little more composed when the soldier, perceiving the effects of his disclamations, followed them up by repeated assurances of the perfect innocence of his intentions, and of the perfectly accidental and harmless nature of his visit. These asseverations, delivered, as they were, in a mild and conciliatory tone, eventually induced the sisters not only to look with less alarm on their unwelcome guest, but to desire him to take a seat by the fire. We will not say, however, that this act of kindness was dictated by pure benevolence. We will not say that it was not done more with a view to disarm their still dreaded visiter of any hostile intentions he might entertain towards them, than from any feeling of compassion. Be this as it may, however, the soldier, after throwing off his snow-covered great-

coat, gladly availed himself of the invitation of his hostesses, and sat him down before the fire.

"Now, my good friends," he said, after having warmed himself a little, and having still further abated the terrors of the sisters by more kind and gentle words, "will you be so good as tell me why you were so much afraid of me when I first entered the house?—for I cannot understand it—seeing that you yourselves opened the door, and of your own accord, and must, therefore, have been prepared to see somebody or other. Was it my cap and red coat that frightened you so? Come, tell me now, candidly."

The sisters looked to each other with a faint smile, and an air of embarrassment; but with an expression of inquiry which said as plainly as an unspoken expression could say it—Shall we tell him?"

Their guest perceived their difficulty, and saw very clearly that there was something to explain—something that they did not altogether like to avow. Observing this—

"Come, now, out with it!" he said, laughingly, "and, depend upon it, I shall not be the least offended, however uncomplimentary it may be to myself."

"Well, then," said the younger sister, "I *will* tell you. Both my sister and I dreamed very lately, that a soldier came into this house here, as you have done, and murdered us. We both dreamed the same dream at different times, and without its being previously known to either of us. Now, you'll allow that there was little wonder that we should have been so much alarmed at your appearance."

"Odd enough," said the soldier, laughing; "but, in my opinion, very particular nonsense. Had you dreamed of a soldier coming to court you, it would have been a much more likely thing, and you would have had a better chance of seeing it realised, I should think, than that he should have come to murder you."

"But why were you abroad in such a night as this, and

at such an hour?" inquired the elder sister, whose fears, as well as those of Jane, were by no means entirely allayed by this familiarity. "Where were you going to, and whence came you?"

"Why, I'll tell you all about that, mistress," replied the soldier, "when I have filled this pipe." And he proceeded to the operation of which he spoke. When he had done, and had expirated a whiff or two—Now, I'll tell you (he said) how it happens that I am out in such an infernal night as this. Depend upon it, it was not with my will. I belong to the 50th Regiment, now stationed in Glasgow, and have been absent on furlough, seeing my poor old mother in the south country, where she resides. I had not seen her, poor soul! for several years; and as she was unwilling to part with me again, I was obliged to stay with her to the last moment of my time. My furlough expired yesterday, and I was anxious to get on to quarters before it was out; for we have got a devil of a fellow in our commanding officer: and this is the reason why I was so late upon the road in such a night. I wanted to save my distance, and avoid a bothering. But it wouldn't do—I was obliged to knock under.

I found my poor mother (went on the soldier) in much better circumstances than I expected to find her; for my father left her in great poverty and with a large family; but a rather curious occurrence gave her a lift in the world, in her own humble way, about a couple of years ago, of which she still reaps the benefit. Mother, you see, is a very pious woman, and she attributes it all to Providence, saying that it was the Divine interference in her behalf. However this may be, it was a very simple affair, and all natural enough.

In mother's neighbourhood, you see—she lives in a remote parish in the south of Scotland—there resides a fellow of the name of Tweedie—Tom Tweedie. Tom is a cattle-

dealer to business, and is well to pass in the world—a lively, active, bustling little scamp he is, and extremely fond of a practical joke, in which he often indulges at the expense of his neighbours. Amongst those who suffer most severely by his waggery is a good-natured man of the name of Brydon—Peter Brydon, a farmer who lives close by him—that is, at the distance of about a mile or so. Well, on this person, who is his favourite butt, Tweedie has played innumerable tricks—all, indeed, of a harmless character, but some of them sufficiently annoying. Either from want of opportunity, or what is more likely, from want of genius, Peter never could accomplish any retaliation—a circumstance which tended greatly to increase the fever of agitation in which Tweedie's superior dexterity and ingenuity in the way of practical joking canstantly kept him. At length, however, chance threw in Peter's way what he considered an excellent opportunity of annoying his mischievous neighbour in turn.

Passing the gable of Tweedie's house one morning, pretty early, on horseback (the road he was travelling led close by it), Peter saw a huge wooden dish of oat-meal porridge smoking on the top of the wall of the house-yard It was intended for the breakfast of the family, and had been put out there to cool. On seeing the dish of porridge, Peter, struck with a bright idea, instantly drew bridle, and, after contemplating it for an instant, rode up to it, and having previously looked carefully around him to see that nobody marked his motions, he lifted the dish from its place, porridge and all, placed it before him on the saddle, brought his plaid over it so as to conceal it, and rode off rejoicing with his prize. Well, you see, it happens that my mother's house lies close by the road on which he had to travel, and at the distance of about a mile from the place where the robbery had been committed. Now, it struck Peter that he could not do better than leave the dish of porridge there, where he knew there was a houseful of chil-

dren, who would clear all out in a twinkling; but he did not know—for my mother had carefully concealed her poverty from her neighbours—how seasonable would be the supply which he now proposed to bring them. On that morning, the children had no breakfast of their own to take. There was not a morsel in the house to give them. Having made up his mind as to the disposal of the dish of porridge, Peter made directly up to my mother's door, and, without dismounting, rapped with the butt-end of his whip. My mother came out.

"Here," said Peter, handing down the stolen mess; "here's a dish of porridge I have brought for the children's breakfast."

"Porridge!" exclaimed my mother, in amazement, and at the same time blushing deeply, from a conviction that her poverty had been detected, "how, in all the world, came you to think of bringing porridge to me, Mr Brydon?"

This was a question which Peter had but little inclination to answer. He therefore waived it.

"Hoot, hoot, guidwife," he replied, "what does that signify? There they are—that's enough—and a capital mess, I warrant ye, your young anes will find them. So let them fa' to wark as fast's they like, and muckle guid may't do them! It'll save you the trouble, at ony rate, guidwife, of making a breakfast of your own."

My mother having now no doubt that her neighbour knew of her destitute condition—of which, however, he, in reality, knew nothing—and that his gift was one of pure benevolence, rising the corner of her apron to her eyes, thanked him with such expressions of humble gratitude as gave him full information regarding what she thought he already knew—her straitened circumstances. Peter made no remark, at the time, on my mother's confession of poverty, and said little or nothing in reply to what she addressed to him, but rode on his way.

Well, it happened that, on this very day, my mother

went to Tweedie's house with some yarn she had been spinning for his wife, who occasionally employed her in that way, when the latter, amongst other things, informed her of the robbery of the porridge; adding, however, that she cared little about the mess, and only regretted the loss of her dish, which, she said, was an excellent one of its kind.

"If they would only bring me the basin back," she said, "they are welcome, whoever took it, to its contents."

The blood rushed to my mother's face. She remained for some moments in silent confusion; but at length said—her face as red as crimson—

"Mrs. Tweedie, your dish is safe; it is in my house, but the porridge is gone."

"In your house, Mrs. Johnston!" (that is my mother's name)—"my basin in your house! How does that happen?" replied Mrs. Tweedie, with a look of surprise, and something like displeasure.

My mother detailed the circumstances as already related; and, thinking herself compelled to acknowledge her poverty, as an apology for having made use of the porridge, she fairly stated her condition; saying, amongst other things, that when it came she had not a morsel in the house.

Mrs. Tweedie rated my mother for not having told her before of her situation, and concluded by promising that neither she nor her children should ever again want a meal as long as she had one to give them; and she instantly loaded her with as many potatoes as she could carry home. Her husband, who was present on this occasion, enjoyed the joke exceedingly, and gave the chosen victim of his own wit, Brydon, great credit for his trick. He further expressed himself highly pleased that the latter had taken the dish of porridge to my mother, seeing that she stood so much in need of them. To make a long story short (added the soldier), both Tweedie and Brydon, who were good kind-hearted men, from this moment that my mother's necessities were

thus so strangely made known to them, took her under their especial patronage.

On the following day, Brydon sent her as much meal and potatoes as lasted her a month; each of them took one of my brothers into their service; their wives gave her as much spinning as she could execute; and a complement of provisions, sometimes of one kind and sometimes of another, has been sent her alternately and regularly ever since by the two benevolent jokers. From that day to this, old mother, has never been in want; and when speaking of the occurrence says, that the day on which Peter Brydon brought the dish of stolen porridge to her door was the luckiest in her life.

Here the soldier finished his story and his pipe together. Both the matter of his little tale and his manner of telling it tended considerably to calm the apprehensions of his hostesses, and to disabuse them, in spite of their dream, of much of the unfavourable opinion they had entertained of his intentions. Still, however, they felt by no means secure, and would even yet have readily given the half, perhaps the whole, of the money in the house, to have been quit of him. Nor were the fears that yet remained lessened by their having discovered, which they had not done for some time after he had entered, that he wore his bayonet by his side. On this formidable weapon the two poor women looked with inexpressible horror; having a strong feeling of apprehension that it was the dreadful instrument by which their destruction was to be accomplished and their dream fulfiled. Now, too, the sisters detected the fellow occasionally glancing around the house, with a most supicious look, as if calculating on future operations. He now, also, began to put questions that greatly alarmed them—such as, Was there nobody in the house but themselves? How far distant was the nearest house? and guessing, with an apparently assumed air of jocularity, that their father (they had informed

him of his death) had left them a good round sum in some corner or other? In short, his behaviour altogether began again to grow extremely suspicious; and, perceiving this, the sisters' fears returned with all there original force.

In the meantime, the storm without, so far from abating, had increased; the dreary, rushing sound of the trees became fiercer and louder, and the fitful gusts of wind more frequent and furious. It was now about one o'clock of the morning, when, actuated by the same motives which had induced them to ask their terrible guest to sit by the fire—namely, to disarm him, by kindness, of any evil design he might entertain towards them—the sisters now offered the soldier some refreshment. He gladly accepted the offer. Food was placed before him, and he ate heartily. When he had done, one of the sisters told him that there was a spare bed in a closet to which she pointed, and that he might go to it if he chose. With this offer he also gladly closed, and immediately retired.

The sisters, well pleased to have got their guest thus disposed of—thinking it something like a sign of harmless intention on his part—determined to sit themselves by the fire throughout the remainder of the night. They were, then, thus sitting, and it might be about one hour after the soldier had retired, listening with feverish watchfulness to every sound, when they suddenly heard a noise as if of some one forcing the door. At first the poor horrified women thought it was some unusual sound produced by the storm, but, on listening again, there was no doubt of the appalling fact. They heard distinctly the working of an iron instrument, and the creaking of the door from its pressure. The wretched women leaped from their seats, and again their wild shrieks were heard rising above the noise of the tempest without. Awakened by their alarming cries—for he had been fast asleep—the soldier started from his bed, calling out, as he hurried on his clothes—

"What the devil is the matter now! By heaven! you are all mad."

"Oh, you know but too well what is the matter," replied one of the sisters, in a voice faint and almost inarticulate with excessive terror—"you know but too well what is the matter. These are some of the other murderers of your gang forcing open the door. O God! in mercy receive our souls!"

"My gang forcing the door! What the devil do you mean?" replied the soldier, emerging from the closet. Then, after an instant—"By heaven! it is so far true. There is some one breaking in, sure enough."

Saying this, he drew his bayonet, and ran to the door; but, ere he gained it, it was forced open, and two men were in the act of entering, one behind the other. On seeing the soldier, the foremost presented a pistol to his head, and drew the trigger; but a click of the lock was the only result. It missed fire. In the next instant the soldier's bayonet was through the ruffian's body, and he fell, when he who was behind him immediately fled. The soldier pursued him, but, after running several hundred yards, gave up the chase as hopeless, and returned to the house, where he found, to his great surprise, that the man whom he had stabbed, and whom he thought he had killed outright, had disappeared, and was nowhere to be seen.

On entering the house—"Well, my good women," said the soldier, "are you now satisfied of the sincerity of my intentions towards you? Why, I think I have saved your lives, in place of taking them."

"You have! you have!" exclaimed both the sisters at once. And oh how thankful are we to God, who alone could have sent you here to protect us on this dreadful night!"

"It certainly was as well for you that I was here," replied the soldier, modestly; but have you any idea of who the villains could be?"

"None in the least," said the younger sister; "but this neighbourhood is filled with bad characters, and we have no doubt it was some of them—for all of them know, we believe, that our father left us a little money. We have alwas dreaded this."

"In that case," said the soldier, "I would advise you to leave this directly, and go to some place of greater safety."

The sisters told him that they had, for some time, meant to do so, and that they intended going to Glasgow to reside.

What subsequently passed, on this eventful night, between the sisters and their gallant protector, we will detail as briefly as we can, in order to get at a more interesting part of our story. Having again secured the door, the soldier sat with his hostesses by the fire till daylight, when, having previously partaken of a plentiful breakfast, he prepared to take the road. Just as he was about to leave the house, the youngest sister approached him, and, after again expressing her gratitude for the protection he had afforded them, slipped ten guineas into his hand The soldier looked at the glittering coins for an instant, with a significant smile, and laying them down on a table that stood by—

"Not a farthing," he said—"not a farthing shill I take. I consider myself sufficiently paid by the shelter you afforded me. I was bound to protect you while under your roof. By admitting me last night you saved my live—and I have saved yours; so accounts are clear between us. This, at any rate," he added laughingly, "will balance them." And, soldier-like, he flung his arms around Jane's neck, and, ere she was aware, had robbed her of half-a-dozen hearty kisses.

This theft committed, he ran out of the door; but was almost immediately after called back again by the elder sister, who, on his return, informed him, that, as Jane intended going into Glasgow on that day, to inform her uncle of what

had happened, and to make arrangements for their instant removal from Brachead, she thought her sister could not do better than avail herself of his company to the city, and go in with him just now. "Besides," she said, "I should like you to see our uncle, if you would be so good as take a step that length with Jane, as you will be able to give a better account of the occurrences of last night than she can, and may better convince him of the necessity of our leaving this instantly. Indeed, I do not know if he would believe our story at all of being attacked last night, unless you were to corroberate it. He would think it was just an invention to get away, as he knows of our anxiety to leave this."

The soldier was delighted with the proposal, and did not attempt to conceal the satisfaction he felt at having Jane, who, as we have already said, was a very pretty girl, for a companion into the city.

In a few minutes Jane was prepared for the journey, and in a very few more she and the young soldier were upon the road; and, as the storm had now entirely subsided, they got on without much difficulty. What conversation passed between them on this occasion, we know not, and can only conjecture from the result, which will be shortly laid before the reader. That it was of a description, however, very agreeable to both, there can be no doubt.

In the meantime, our business is to follow them into Glasgow, where they arrive in little more than a couple of hours.

On reaching her uncle's with her companion, Jane was greatly disappointed and rather surprised, to learn from one of her little cousins—its mother being out of the way at the moment—that Davidson was not at home, that he had gone to the country on the previous night, and had not yet returned.

"Then where's your brother;" inquired Jane.

"He's gone to the country, too," said the child.

"Is he with your father?"

"Yes."

"Did he go last night also?"

"Yes."

"And don't you know where they went to, or when they will be home?"

The child could not tell.

At this moment the mother of the child came in, and at once accounted for the absence of her husband and son, by saying that they had got work at a distance of some miles from the town, naming the place, and that she expected them home that day, although she could not say when.

As the days were short, and her uncle's return uncertain, Jane resolved on going straight home again, and proposing to her sister that they should, for that night, at any rate, remove, taking all their money along with them, to the friend of their father's already alluded to, whose name was Anderson. And this step the sisters accordingly took.

Leaving them thus disposed of for a short time, we shall return to their uncle's house in Glasgow; and, by doing so, we shall find there some things of a very extraordinary character occurring. Shortly after Jane had left her uncle's that person came home, but he returned a very different man from what he had set out. Strong, hale, and erect, though somewhat stricken in years, when he went away he now appeared, as he approached his own house, ghastly pale, bent nearly double, and dreadfully weak and exhausted He seemed, in short, to be suffering from some excruciating pain. He could hardly get along without supporting himself by the walls of the houses he passed. On entering his own house, he went directly to bed, without speaking to any one, further than telling his wife that he was very ill— that he had received a severe injury by falling down amongst some loose timber, a pointed piece of which, he said, had penetrated his chest. His wife. in great alarm, proposed send-

ing instantly for a surgeon; but this the wounded man would by no means allow—saying that his wound, though painful, was not, he thought, very serious, and that he had no doubt he would soon recover. A few hours afterwards, however, finding himself getting much worse, he not only allowed, but desired, that a surgeon should be sent for. One was immediately procured. On examining the wound, he inquired of Davidson how he had met with it. He was told, in reply, the same story which we have just related.

"That cannot be true," said the surgeon. "Your wound has not been inflicted by a splinter of wood, but by a sharp three-edged instrument. It is a clean wound, and has all the appearance of having been inflicted with a bayonet or some such weapon. Indeed I feel quite assured of this, whatever may be your motives for concealing it."

Davidson repeated his asseverations of having come by his injury by falling on a pointed piece of wood.

"Well, well, sir, my business is not how or by what means your wound has been inflicted, but how it is to be cured," (During this time he was examining the injury.) "But I fear," he added, "it is beyond my skill, or that of any other human being. Your wound, I have every reason to think, is mortal."

"Do you think so?" said the patient with great calmness and composure.

"I certainly do," replied the surgeon, "and I think it my duty to tell you, that, if you have any worldly affairs to settle, the sooner you set about it the better."

The patient made no reply for some time, but seemed absorbed in thought. At length he said—

"Could you, sir, procure me a visit from a clergyman? I know none myself, and it may be of consequence that I should see one. I have something of importance to communicate."

The surgeon readily undertook to bring such a person as

the dying man desired to see, and immediately departed for that purpose, having previously promised, at the earnest request of the sufferer himself, that he would return along with him. "I wish to have you both together," he said, It will be better that there are two."

In less than half-an-hour after, the surgeon returned with one of the clergymen of the city. The moment they entered, Davidson requested the former to shut the door, and to see that it was properly secured. This done, he requested them to draw near him, when he began, in a low voice, the astounding confession that it was he who had attempted to break into the house of his nieces, and that it was he whom the soldier had stabbed on that occasion. All this, indeed, the surgeon had previously suspected; for he had heard of the attempted robbery, and of one of the ruffians having been stabbed with a bayonet by a soldier; but did not, till now, know anything of the relationship of the parties. Thus much the dying man confessed; but he would not say, though pressed to tell, who was his associate in the crime. This person, however, was subsequently ascertained, beyond all doubt, to have been his son, as he never came home, nor was ever afterwards seen or heard of by any one who knew him. Having made this confession, the wretched man expired, and that even before one word of intercession could be offered up in his behalf by the attending clergyman.

Having brought this incident to a close, we return to the two sisters, who were now residing with their father's friend, Anderson. This worthy man now took an active interest in their affairs; and, approving of their original intention of removing to Glasgow, did all he could to further their views in this respect, by selling off the cattle, farming utensils, &c., and stock of every kind.

Some days after their settlement in Glasgow, their friend Anderson called on them, and remarked, in the course of conversation with them, that he thought, now that they

were all snug and safe, something ought to be done for the soldier to whom they owed, not only a great part of their little fortune, but in all probability their lives. At this moment the young soldier entered. During the conversation that followed, Mr. Anderson discovered that the young man would willingly be quit of the army. This discovery he kept in recollection; and, when the soldier left them, he proposed to the sisters to purchase his discharge, and to do so without his knowledge. This was accordingly done on the very next day; and in three weeks afterwards, Henry Johnston (which was the young soldier's name), and Jane Edmonston were united in the bands of holy wedlock. The former, whose dislike of the army, it subsequently appeared, applied only to its subordinate situation—more definitely speaking, to the condition of a private—soon after purchased a lieutenant's commission with part of his wife's money, and finally died a lieutenant-colonel, leaving behind him the reputation of a good man and a gallant solder.

END OF VOL. XIII.

Manchester: Printed by A. Ireland & Co., Pall Mall.

CONTENTS.

Page

THE COVENANTING FAMILY ..... *(John Mackay Wilson)* 1

THE OLD CHRONICLER'S TALES ..... *(Alexander Leighton)*

THE PRINCE OF SCOTLAND 34

RETRIBUTION ..... *(Alexander Campbell)* 66

THE PROFESSOR'S TALES ..... *(Professor Thomas Gillespie)*

THE ENTHUSIAST 98

TREES AND BURNS 113

KIRKYARDS 119

POLWARTH ON THE GREEN ..... *(John Mackay Wilson)* 125

THE FESTIVAL ..... *(John Mackay Wilson)* 139

A LEGEND OF HOLYROOD ..... *(Alexander Leighton)* 157

THE RESTORED SON ..... *(Oliver Richardson)* 184

THE SKEAN DHU ..... *(Alexander Campbell)* 216

THE SEVEN YEARS' DEARTH ..... *(John Howell)* 233

THE ORDER OF THE GARTER. A STORY OF WARK CASTLE *(John Mackay Wilson)* 265

WILSON'S
TALES OF THE BORDERS,
AND OF SCOTLAND.

THE COVENANTING FAMILY.

THIRTY years ago, there dwelt an old man named Simon Cockburn, who followed the avocations of parish teacher and precentor. Every Saturday afternoon, after he had washed his hands from the labours of the week, he went down to the public-house of the village in which he dwelt, and took his seat by the parlour window or fire (according as it was summer or winter), to read the newspaper, and see, as he said, "what country Bonaparte had conquered *this* week;" and, as Simon read of some new achievement of "the terrible Corsican," as he called him, he was wont to lay down the newspaper, take off his spectacles, and say unto himself aloud, "But if the chield should come owre to Britain, surely he will never be guilty o' the cruelty and folly o' doing onything to the parish schoolmasters. He owes so much to learning himsel, that he will certainly respect those who impart it to others."

But, if a stranger chanced to be in the room when he had glanced over the news, and as he began to warm and wax mighty over his single pint (or mutchkin) bottle of strong ale, Simon's wonted taciturnity gave way to a flow of speech; and seldom had the conversation continued long, when he invariably inquired, "Did ever ye hear o' the saying, by what law the bishops were expelled from Scotland?"

The answer being in the negative, he continued—"Weel,

it was neither by civil law nor by canon law, but by *Dunse Law!*"

"By Dunse Law, old man!" inquired his auditors; "why, what law is that?"

If ye never heard o' it (answered he), it is worth your while going to see it. Ye may become acquainted wi' it without paying a fee to a writer. Dunse Law, sir, is a bonny round hill, which rises behind the honest town o' that name. Ye have a magnificent view upon the top o' it. In my opinion, it is equal to the view from the Calton at Edinburgh; and some o' my scholars that have been travellers inform me that the view from the Calton is every way equal to the far-famed view in the Bay o' Naples. Ye have the whole Merse lying beneath your feet, like a beautifully-laid-out and glorious garden—the garden o' some mighty conqueror, that had converted a province into a pleasure-ground, and walled it round wi' mountains. There ye behold the Blackadder wimpling along; the Whitadder curling round below you, and as far as ye can see—now glittering in a haugh, or buried among woody braes. Before ye, also, ye behold the Cheviots and the Northumberland hills, wi' a broad country, the very sister o' the Merse, lying below them, and which runs to Tweedside, where they stand and look at each other! Down the middle distance runs the Tweed, shining out here and there, like an illuminated lake, and receiving the Border rivers o' both countries into its bosom, just as a hen gathers its young under its wings. To the right hand, also, ye behold Roxburghshire, wi' the dimness o' distance, like a thin veil thrown owre its beauty, and its hills a' before ye. Ye see also the smoke arising from towns, villages, and hamlets, and hovering owre them in the midway air, like almost transparent clouds. Gentlemen's seats, and the plantations around them, lie scattered owre the scene; farm-houses that lairds might live in, and stackyards that no other country could produce. On each elbow ye have the purple

Lammermuir, where a hundred hirsels graze; and to the east, the mighty ocean, wi' the ships sailing upon it, where, wi' their white sails spread to the sun, they look from the distance just like sea-birds poising themselves on their outstretched wings owre the deep. Ye see also the islands that rise wondrously from its bosom—fragments which the great waters have stolen from the dry land, or the dry land from the waters. But I ought to have mentioned that, before ye, also, ye see the ruins o' castles, some o' them still majestic, which changed masters a hundred times, as victory chanced to decide for the English bow or the Scottish spear, and which yet bear manifestations o' having been places o' strength and terror. All these things, sir, and mony mair, do ye see from Dunse Law—for I have described it very imperfectly; but I hope I have said aneugh to convince ye that it is no everyday view. And now, I shall endeavour to explain to ye the meaning o' the saying, that the bishops were expelled from Scotland by *Dunse Law.*

When the first and unfortunate King Charles had the infatuation—and I may also say the cruelty—to attempt to bend and twist the consciences o' our forefaithers, just as if they had been willows in the hands o' a basketmaker, to make them swallow the service-book, and to clothe and feed bishops, and bow their heads to them, they, like men who regarded liberty o' conscience, the freedom o' their country, and, above all, the right o' worshipping their Maker as he had commanded them in his Word, to be dearer than life—when the king caused his troopers to ride rough-shod out owre Scotland, and to awe them into obedience with the naked sword—they also laid their hands upon their swords, ready to resist, and, flying to the hills, they congregated together a mighty army.

The watchword o' the heroic army was, "*For Christ's Crown and the Covenant;*" and, having congregated together to the number o' many thousands, they, in accordance with

the wish o' the Tables and chief men, were placed under the command o' the famous General Leslie. When, therefore, the king heard o' these things, he set out from London towards Scotland at the head o' his gay cavaliers and valorous men o' war, doubting not but that, at the glance o' his royal eyes, the rebellious Scottish peasants would be stricken with awe and reverence, lay down their arms, and bend their necks before him. Now, General Leslie was an old man, and a little man; but he had a wise head, and, like Bonaparte, he had a mighty spirit in his wee breast: and when he heard that the king was on his way to Scotland, at the head o' a regular army, he resolved to meet him face to face; and, for that purpose, the army o' the Covenant marched forward to Dunglass.

But when Charles learned from his spies accounts of the numbers, the discipline, and enthusiasm of the Covenanters, his heart failed him; and when he looked on his own army, and perceived that they neither had zeal in his cause, nor discipline, nor numbers, to enable them to contend against the army that he was leading them to oppose, he lowered his tone marvellously. He found that the divine prerogative which surrounds kings is but a broken hedge, owre which every outlaw may trample, where the hearts and affections o' the people dinna form an outer bulwark around it. And though, a few days before, he had denounced all the inhabitants o' Scotland as traitors, and threatened, in the arrogance and confidence o' his heart, to deal with them as such, and had even given orders to his generals to wreak their vengeance on the rebels, he was now glad to send Lord Holland, with a trumpeter, to the camp o' the Covenanters at Dunglass, to proclaim to them that he was willing to grant them all their demands, and that their country should be free, provided they would profess their allegiance to him, and not approach within ten miles o' the Border.

Now, sir, the Covenanters were by no means republicans

in their principles: all they wanted was freedom—freedom o' mind and body; the right o' worshipping in the manner most agreeable to their conscience; and o' not being compelled to unbutton their pockets to pay for objects o' which they disapproved. They had a sort o' liking for Charlie. His faither was a Scotchman, and had been born among them; and they were anxious to like him, if he would only put it in their power to do it. They were loth to draw the sword against him; and, when they did do it, it was for conscience sake. They therefore accepted his conditions readily; for he promised fairly, and as much, if not more, than they expected to wring from him by the slaughter o' his troops, and steeping the land wi' the blood o' its inhabitants.

When Charles, therefore, heard o' the readiness with which they had agreed to his proposal, in the vanity and delusion o' his spirit, he attributed it to his great power and glory as a king; and he repented that he had not offered to them more haughty and less righteous terms. But those that he had proposed to them he had no design to keep.

He therefore marched forward his army, and encamped on the south bank o' the Tweed, above Berwick, at a place which historians call the Birks—which I take to be the fields lying between West Ord and Norham Castle. Here he soon gave proofs that, having come from the Thames to the Tweed, it was his resolution not to return until he had wreaked his vengeance on the people o' Scotland, whom he still regarded as rebels.

When, therefore, General Leslie heard o' the king's doings, he gave orders to his army to march towards Dunse.

But, before proceeding farther, I must make mention o' a Covenanting family, who are to be more particularly the objects o' my present discourse. At that time, there resided in the Castle Wynd in Dunse a singular and godly woman, one Alice Cockburn (or, as some called her, Weather-

burn, that being her maiden name). She was the wife o' a devout and worthy man, one Alexander Cockburn, who was the proprietor o' a croft in the neighbourhood; and they had five sons, all men grown. Their names were John, James, Andrew, William; and the youngest, who was nineteen, was called Alexander, after his faither. I hae mentioned Alice first, not only because her name will be hereafter mentioned in this narrative, but also because, while we often speak in triumph o' what our faithers did in securing our civil and religious liberty, we forget to do justice to our mothers, who were even more enthusiastic in the great and glorious cause than our faithers were. They fired their zeal—they first lifted up a voice against tyranny—and, while our faithers fought in the field, they bound up their bleeding wounds, brought water from the brooks to cool their parched lips, and were purveyors to the army, supplying them with clothing and with food.

It was on the evening o' the 5th o' June, 1639, that Alice Cockburn hastened into her house, exclaiming, "Rise, husband!—rise, sons!—arm yourselves, and let us awa to Dunse Law; for there is a sicht to be seen there the nicht, such as never before was witnessed in a' broad Scotland, nor yet in a' Christendie. Haste ye! gird your swords upon your thighs, and awa to assist the armies o' the Kirk and our country to do battle against the Philistines."

"Tell us what ye mean, Alice," said her husband. "The king and his cavaliers are still near Berwick; I hae heard naething o' our people having left Dunglass, and there can be nae battle on Dunse Law the nicht—therefore, what is it ye allude to?"

"The king may be whar ye say," replied she; "but General Leslie and our men are encamping upon the Law; and they are a host whose numbers seem countless as the sand upon the sea-shore. Our oppressors will be consumed as stubble before them, and tyrants will become their

captives. Haste ye, sons; arm yersels to be ready for the fight that is to fight. Enrol yersels in the army o' the righteous, for the sake o' the truth, for the sake o' conscience and yer country. And, on my death-bed, if I be deprived o' every other consolation, I will still be borne up by the secret joy, that my five sons and my half-marrow drew their swords, and fought side by side, for the cause o' the Covenant."

"Alice," said her husband, "sae lang as I hae ye to stir me up, and mak me mair fervent in the great cause, which it is our duty to support with our whole might and our whole strength, ye shall never hear it said that Sandy Cockburn shunned the brunt o' danger, or that his sword returned empty when he met wi' an oppressor weapon to weapon. My richt hand is aulder and stiffer than it has been; but, when ance suppled, it has lost but little o' its strength—and I think I can answer for our sons."

"Ye may do that safely," said John, their eldest; "there shall nae want o' daring be fixed to the name o' Cockburn."

His three younger brothers, James, Andrew, and William, agreed with him, and spoke in the same manner; but Alexander, the youngest, and the faither's namesake, though generally esteemed the boldest amongst them, hastened not to provide himself with arms, as his brothers did, but he sat with his arms folded upon his bosom, and was silent.

"Alexander," said his mother, "wherefore do ye sit wi' yer arms faulded, and look like ane that wishes to conceal the word *coward* written on his breast?"

"Nae man, no even my brothers, durst ca' me a coward, mother," said he; "but I canna help thinking that this is an unnatural war, in which freends and kindred will plunge their swords into each other. And there are some who would be fighting against us whose swords I would rather feel pierced through my body, than raise mine against them."

"Oh, wae's me!" she cried, "am I to be disgraced—is the truth to be deserted by my youngest and dearest—the Benjamin o' my age? Where, laddie—where are a' the precepts I endeavoured to inculcate into you now? But I see how it is: it a' arises out o' yer fondness for the dauchter o' that enemy o' our cause—Robert Stuart. Is there naebody ye can see to like but her? Her father is a spy and a persecutor, a defender o' the supremacy o' bishops, an advocate o' the service-book, and an upholder o' the absolute power o' the king. She is o' the same spirit and principles as her faither is; and, in that respect, she is more to be commended than ye are, for she has hearkened to the voice o' her parents, and has not the sin o' disobedience on her head. Have ye forgot the command, 'Be not unequally yoked?' Rise, Alexander, I command ye, get ready yer arms, and gae wi' yer faither, yer brothers, and yer mother to the camp."

"Na, na, guidwife," said her husband, "that maunna be; for liberty o' conscience am I buckling on my sword; and I winna see the conscience o' my ain bairn suffer wrang. If Alexander winna gang wi' us, a' that I ask o' him is, that he winna draw his sword against the cause in defence o' which his faither and his brothers go forth, ready to lay down their lives, if they be required."

"Faither," cried Alexander, springing up, and grasping his hand, "I will never fight against ye!—never! I stand by your side to the last, or die by it, and my arm shall be ready to defend ye! Where you go, I will go!"

"That is right, Alexander, my man," said his eldest brother; "I kenned there was mettle in the callant, and principle, too—though I must say that he is rather unpleasantly situated, and I canna say that I would like his case to be my ain."

His arms being sought out also, the father and his sons were accoutred and ready to depart, when Alice again said—

"We have not yet prepared all that we ought to do. We are but stewards o' the inheritance intrusted to our hands in this world; and to the sacred cause in which ye are about to engage, it is our duty also to contribute liberally from the substance with which we have been blessed. Now, what say ye, guidman—do ye think that we could afford to take to the camp, and present before the general, six sheep, six firlots o' wheat, and six measures o' meal? Have ye faith to venture sae far?"

"Alice," replied he, "can ye doubt me? If it were necessary, I would consider it my duty not only to part wi' my stock to the last sheep, and wi' my corn to the last firlot—but I would sell the croft also, and part wi' the money, rather than see one who has drawn his sword in defence o' the Covenant and his country want."

"Ye mak my heart glad," answered Alice; "and now let us kneel and give thanks that we have lived to see the day when the armies o' the Kirk are gathered together, powerful as those which David led against the Philistines."

And Alexander Cockburn and his family raised the voice o' thanksgiving, after which they knelt down together, and he prayed aloud. When they arose, each man girded his sword upon his thigh, and the father commanded that a horse should be harnessed, which was laden with the wheat and the meal for the army of the Covenant. The sheep they drove on before them, and Alice accompanied her husband and her sons.

I must now, however, take notice o' Mr Stuart, o' whom particular mention was made by Alice, as being an enemy to the Covenant, and a persecutor o' its adherents. He was a man o' considerable substance, and lived about midway between Dunse and Polwarth. His daughter, to whom young Alexander Cockburn was attached, and whom his mother cast up to him, was called Flora. She was at that period a bonny young creature o' eighteen; her hair was

like the yellow gowd when the sun shines on't, and her een were a brighter and a safter blue than the sky on a summer morning, when there isna a cloud in a' the heavens. She was tall and gentle-looking, and her waist ye might hae spanned wi' your hand. It was wranging her to ca' her a persecutor; for though she was an advocate for Episcopacy, as her faither had taught her to be, there wasna a sentiment in her heart that could hae wranged a worm.

Young Alexander and Flora had become very early acquainted wi' each other, and as early intimate. They were yet but bairns in a manner; but, young as they were, they had a happy *langsyne*, on which they could look back, in which they had

"Paidel'd in the burn,
And pu'd the gowans fine."

They had been playmates from the time that they could toddle hand in hand thegither; and the hands that they had joined to help each other to run when but infants, they now wished to join for good and a', that they might journey pleasantly together through life. Their hearts had become insensibly twisted around each other, and they had been so long entwined, that they had become as one.

But I must now inform you of the arrival of Alice, her husband, and her sons, at Dunse Law. When they arrived at the camp, Alexander the elder inquired of one who seemed, by the orders which he was giving, to be an officer, or a man in authority, if he could see the general; for the officers in the army of the Covenant wore the plain blue bonnet, and the blue riband streaming from it, without any distinction from the men in the ranks; and when the men lay upon the bare ground, so did they.

"Ye seem to come wi' a free-will offering," said the officer; "and not only wi' an offering o' provision, but, judging by your soldierly array, ye come to fight the battles o' conscience, the Covenant, and our country."

"We do," said the father; "my five sons and mysel, and these sheep and provisions, are the offerings o' my children's mother; which, my lord, or whatever ye may be, wi' her husband and five sons thrown into the scale, makes nae sma' sacrifice."

"Ye speak truly, worthy friend," said the officer; "we rejoice in such devotedness towards our glorious purpose. It is a volunteer cause, and Heaven affords us assurance of victory. Yonder, see ye, is the general riding round the tents on the black horse; go to him before he take up his quarters in the castle for the night. He will give ye a gracious welcome."

"Weel, that is very odd," said the senior Alexander Cockburn, gazing upon the general with a look o' surprise. "He is a wee, auld-looking body. My opinion o' him was, that he would be something like what we understand Sir William Wallace to have been—a man before whom his enemies fled, at the shaking o' his spear."

"O Alexander!" said Alice, "hae ye forgot yoursel athegither, or rather hae ye forgot your Bible? Do ye no remember the purposes for which the weak things o' this earth were chosen?"

"True, Alice," said he; "I stand corrected." And the father, the mother, their armed sons, and the sheep and provisions which they brought with them, were placed before General Leslie.

"Well, good folk," inquired the general, "what would ye wi' me?"

"We come, sir," said the elder Cockburn, lifting his bonnet, "to offer you our best services o' heart and hand, and to—to ——"

Here old Alexander, who, though one o' the most rigid and unbending men o' the Covenant, was withal a man o' singular modesty, and, in some respects, o' bashfulness, began to falter; on which Alice, taking upon herself the

office o' speaker, began to say—"Yes, your excellency—that is, your generalship—we are come ——"

But her husband gently pulled her by the sleeve, whispering, "Haud sae, Alice, just let me gang on—ye ken it behoves a woman to be silent, and in an assembly to open not her mouth."

Though an obedient and an affectionate wife, this was a point which she probably would have been disposed to argue with him; but the general, interfering, said, "Wi' your good leave, sir, I shall hear your wife. Scotland owes a debt to its wives and mothers, which, as a nation, they should be proud to acknowledge; they are manifesting a godly enthusiasm, which is far, far beyond the boasted virtue o' the mothers and maidens o' Rome, when they saved their city from destruction. Speak on, good woman."

Alice, thus emboldened, proceeded—"Weel, sir, as my husband has said, he and our sons have come to offer you their best services o' heart and hand; and o' the little we can spare, we hae brought ye six sheep, six firlots o' wheat, and six measures o' meal. The latter is but a poor offering; but when, as a wife, I present to ye my husband, and as a mother, my five sons, I trust that what we bring will not be altogether unacceptable; while it shall be my care to provide means at least for their support; so that, if they be not of assistance to ye, they at least shall not be a burden."

The old general dismounted, and took Alice by the hand. "While Scotland can boast o' such wives and mothers as you," said he—"and I am proud to say there are many such—the enemies o' the Covenant will never be able to prevail against us."

Alexander Cockburn and his five sons then began to erect a sort o' half hut, half tent, beside those o' the rest o' the army, that they might be always in readiness. And, oh, sir, at that period, Dunse Law presented one o' the grandest sights that ever the eyes o' man were witness to. On the

side o' that hill were encamped four-and-twenty thousand men. Lowest down, lay the tents o' the nobles and the great officers, their tops rising like pyramids; before them were placed forty pieces o' cannon; and between them were the tents o' their captains; and from every captain's tent streamed a broad blue flag, on which was inscribed the words I have already quoted—"FOR CHRIST'S CROWN AND THE COVENANT." Higher up the hill were the straw-covered and turf-built huts o' the soldiers: and from the rising o' the sun until its going down, ye wouldna hae heard an oath or a profane expression amongst those four-and-twenty thousand men; but, on the contrary, hundreds o' the ministers o' the gospel were there, each man with his Bible in his hand, and his sword girt upon his thigh, ready to lead his followers to the battle, or to lay down his life in testimony o' the truth o' the doctrines which he preached. Morning and night there was public worship throughout the camp, and the drum summoned the army to prayers and to hearing the Word, while the services were attended by all, from the general down to the humblest recruit that had but newly entered the ranks. At every hour in the day, also, from some part o' the camp or other, the sounds o' praise and prayer were heard. Every man in that army was an enthusiast; but he had a glorious cause to excite his enthusiasm—the cause o' his Creator, and his country's liberty—ay, and the liberty, the rights, and privileges o' posterity also. Yes, sir, I say o' posterity; for it is to those men that we are indebted for the blessings and the freedom which we enjoy beyond the people o' other countries; though there are men who dared to call them *mere fanatics!*—fanatics, indeed!—but, oh, they are fanatics that saved their country—that braved oppression—that defied it even to death, and that wi' their own blood wrote the irrevocable charter o' our liberty! If they were fanatics, they were such as every nation in the world would be proud

to call its sons, and would glory to have possessed. They are fanatics, if they must be called so, whose deeds, whose characters, whose firmness o' purpose, the integrity o' whose principles, and whose matchless courage, with the sublime height to which they carried their devotion, despising imprisonment, pain, and death, render us unworthy o' being numbered as their descendants. I canna endure to hear the men, whose graves are the foundations on which are built our civil and religious liberties, so spoken o'; I winna see their graves—I winna hear their memories profaned. More fit we were to set up a national monument in remembrance o' them.

On the day after the army o' the Covenant encamped on Dunse Law, the king held a grand review o' his army by Tweedside; but just as the review was over—and when the king and his courtiers were retiring, to sit down to their wine, and their feasts o' fat things, and his poor half-hungered soldiers to kitchen out a broken biscuit or a piece o' bare bannock (while the Covenanters were living like gentlemen on wheaten bread and flesh-meat every day)—some o' the Loyalists, that had clearer een than others, observed the great camp upon Dunse Law, and the hundred banners waving in the wind, and ran to communicate what they had observed to the king. Charles, to do him justice, was a canny, silly sort o' a body, but just infatuated wi' his ideas about his prerogative—by which he meant absolute power—and his foolish desire to force everybody to swallow a bishop, gown, sleeves, and all! However, when he heard that the "blue bonnets were bound for the Border," he spoke angrily and disdainfully to his officers, and upbraided them that they had not brought him tidings o' the movements o' his enemies; and, calling for his prospect-glass, he stood upon the bank o' the river—and there, sure enough, to his sorrow and consternation, he beheld the camp, and the multitude o' armed men. He even to a nearness counted

their numbers. Now, Dunse, as the crow flies, not being quite seven miles to where the Tweed forms the border line between Ladykirk and Norham, his Majesty spoke o' punishing the Covenanters for having broken the compact that they had entered into not to approach within ten miles—forgetting, be it remembered, that he was the first aggressor, in having sent his troops to attack a party o' the Covenanters at Kelso; and forgetting, also, that his army was unable to stand up, even for a single hour, against the host who stood over against them. He soon, however, became sensible o' his weakness, and he again began to offer liberal and generous terms to his armed subjects; but no sooner did he find them ready to accept them, than his kingly word became like a whuff o' reek that has vanished out o' sight in the air!—ye may seek it, but where will ye find it? The Covenanters were not willing to bathe their swords in the blood o' their fellow-subjects, and the king was feared to measure the strength o' his army against the blue-bonneted host.

But, as it is not my intention to narrate to ye a history o' the wars o' the Covenant, I shall only say that the king, seeing he had no chance if it came to a battle, consented to summon a parliament, and that everything should be settled as the Covenanters desired. Both armies were accordingly disbanded, and Alexander Cockburn and his five sons returned home to their own house, and laid their weapons aside.

The old man said that "he trusted the time had come when in this country the sword should be turned into a ploughshare, and the spear into a pruning-hook."

But Alice answered him, saying, "O Alexander! a foolish thing has been done by our rulers. They have got an assurance from the king; but they ought to have made assurance doubly sure. You have read, and they must have read—'Put not your trust in princes.' The day is not

distant when they will rue that they overlooked that text."

There was too much o' the nature o' prophecy in the words which Alice spoke; for twelve months had not passed, when the mischief-making little churchman, Bishop Laud, and other evil spirits o' a similar stamp, egged up the simple king to break a' the promises he had made to the people o' Scotland, and wi' a strong hand carry war and revenge into the country. But, poor man, he reckoned without his host. His advisers were like the counsellors o' Solomon's son—they advised him to his ruin. The news o' his intention ran through Scotland like wildfire. Beacons burned on the mountains—men gathered on the plains—and before the king was in readiness to leave London, all Scotland was in arms. Old Leslie was once more chosen commander-in-chief; and the same valiant men that the year before had encamped upon Dunse Law, gathered together, and marched towards the Borders.

They had reached Chousely, which is between three and four miles west o' Dunse, when Alexander Cockburn and his sons again joined them, and brought with them an offering o' provisions, as before. The general again remembered and welcomed them; and he recollected them the more readily, because Alice accompanied them. On the following morning, when the army began to march towards the south, she took her leave o' them, saying, "Fareweel, husband! bairns!—to the protection o' Him whose battles ye go forth to fight, I resign ye. Pray ye that, whate'er betide, I may be strengthened to bow my head, and say, '*His will be done!*' Go, then, acquit yoursels valiantly; think on the sacred cause in which ye are engaged, and trust in the Hand that will sustain ye. Bairns, fareweel!—your mother blesses you!—she will pray for you! Husband, fareweel!—look after our bairns. Alexander! ye are the youngling o' my flock; and oh, hinny, my heart yearns for ye, lest ye permit unworthy

thoughts to arise in yer breast, that may deprive yer young arm o' its strength."

"Fear not for me, mother," replied the youth.

She therefore returned home; and they proceeded wi' the army towards Coldstream, from whence they crossed the Tweed, and proceeded, by way o' Wooler and Longframlington, towards Newcastle, o' which town they came within sight on the tenth day after entering Northumberland; but, finding Newcastle strongly fortified and garrisoned by the king's troops, under General Conway, they proceeded a few miles up the Tyne to Newburn, where the civil war in reality began, and the first battle was fought.

When the king's troopers heard that the Covenanters were encamped at Newburn, they galloped out o' Newcastle, sword in hand; each man swearing lustily that he would kill a dozen o' the blue-bonnetted Jockies—as they called the Covenanters in derision—and boasting that they would make prisoners o' all who escaped the sword. But when the inhabitants o' the canny toon heard the braggadocio o' the redcoats, as they galloped through the streets, flourishing their swords, "Dinna brag tow fast, lads," said they, shaking their heads; "words arena deeds; and tak care that each ane o' ye doesna catch a Tartar."

Next morning, the battle o' Newburn was fought; and the tone o' the king's soldiers was indeed lowered. They were routed at every point, they ran to and fro in confusion, and their panic was like a whirlwind in a barn-yard. "The road to Durham—show us, show us the road to Durham!" they cried; and, helter-skelter, neck-or-nought, leaving swords, pistols, carbines, muskets, everything they could throw away, by the roadside, away to Durham, and far beyond it, they ran.

Only five o' the army o' the Covenant were left dead on the field, but among those five was old Alexander Cockburn, the husbsnd o' Alice. After the battle, his sons found his

mangled and lifeless body in a narrow lane, between two gardens, surrounded by a heap o' dead Loyalists, who had sunk beneath his sword before he fell.

It is said that the first blow is half the battle; and it was so wi' the Covenanters upon this occasion; their sudden victory at Newburn not only struck dismay into the hearts o' the royal troops, but reason and fear baith began to whisper their warnings in the ears o' the monarch. He once more became a negotiator and seeker for peace with his thrice-cheated and injured subjects. They remembered the divine precept, to forgive their brother though he offended against them seven times in a day, and they kept this commandment before their eyes in all their dealings with the king. They forgave him his lack o' faith, and the hollowness o' his promises; and, extending to him the right hand o' allegiance, he once more gave his kingly pledge to grant them all that they desired, and to ratify it by the acts o' a parliament. Puir man! he had lang been baith king and parliament in his ain person; and he conceived that in him dwelt absolute power, and absolute wisdom; but little did he dree what a dear parliament the ane that he then spoke o' was to be to him. It is distinguished by the emphatic appellation o' "THE PARLIAMENT" even unto this day; and by that designation it will continue to be known. Thus the arms and the cause o' the Covenant again triumphed; and, the objects for which the army took the field being accomplished, they were dismissed, and returned every man to his own house.

With afflicted hearts, while they rejoiced at the accomplishment o' the object for which they had taken up arms, the five sons o' Alice Cockburn returned to Dunse. She was yet ignorant o' her husband's death, and having been informed o' their approach, she met them at the door. She stretched out her arms to welcome them, but they fell, as if suddenly stricken wi' palsy, by her side; and wi a trembling voice,

and a look that bespoke her forebodings, she inquired, "Where is *he?*"

They looked sadly one towards another, as if each were anxious that the other should communicate the tidings. Her eldest son took her hand, and said mournfully, "Come into the house, mother."

Their sorrowfu looks, their dejected manner, told her but too plainly her husband's fate.

"He is dead!" she cried, in a tone o' heart-piercing solitariness and sorrow, as she accompanied them into the house, where she had beheld them equip themselves for battle.

"My father is dead," said Alexander, her youngest; "but he died bravely, mother, in the cause in which ye glory, and in which a' Scotland glories; and, to the deeds done by his hand on the day he fell, we, in a great measure, owe the freedom o' our country, and the security o' the Covenant."

She clasped her hands together, and sat down and wept.

"Mother," said her sons, gathering round her, "dinna mourn."

"She rose, she wept upon their necks from the eldest to the youngest. "Ye hae lost a faither," said she, "whose loss to ye nane but thae wha kenned him at his ain fireside can estimate; and I hae lost hae husband, who, for eight-and-thirty years, has been dearer to me than the licht o' the sun, for wherever he was, there was aye sunlicht upon my heart. But his life has been laid down in a cause worthy o' the first martyrs. I hae endeavoured to pray—'THY will be done;' and pray for me, bairns, that I may submit to that will without repining, for the stroke is heavy, and nature is weak."

Again she sat down and wept, and now she lifted her hands in prayer, and again she wrung them in the bereavement o' widowhood, saying, "O my Alexander!—my hus-

band!—shall I never, never see ye again?" And her sons gathered round her, to comfort her.

On the day following, Alexander, the youngest o' the sons o' Alice, went towards Polwarth, in the hope o' obtaining an interview with Flora Stuart, whom he had not seen for several months; for, from the time that he had joined the Covenanting army on Dunse Law, her father had forbidden him his house. He spoke o' him as the young traitor, and forbade Flora, at her peril, to speak to him again. But, as the sang says,

"Love will venture in where it daurna weel be seen;

and Alexander again ventured to see her whose image was for ever present wi' his thoughts, as if her portrait were engraven on his heart. It was about the back end o' harvest, and the full moon was shining bright upon the stubble fields and the brown hills; he was passing by Chousely (or, as some call it, Choicelee), the very place where his father, his brothers, and himself, had last joined the army o' the Covenant, when he observed a figure tripping along the road before him. One glance was sufficient. He knew it was she whom he sought—his own Flora. He ran forward.

"Flora!" he cried, "stop, dear—stop—it is me!"

She turned round and said, "Sir!"

The cold abruptness of that word "sir!" was like a dagger driven through his bosom; and for a moment he stood before her, in silence and confusion, as one who has been detected o' some offence. But true affection is never long either in finding words or an equivalent for them.

"Flora," said he, holding out his hand, "it is long since we met; I hae suffered affliction since then, and encountered danger, and considering the long, long friendship—the more than friendship, Flora—that has been between us, and the vows we have exchanged wi' each other, I think I micht have expected something mair frae ye now than—'Sir!' Is

your heart changed, Flora—hae ye forgot me—or do ye wish to forget me?"

"No, Alexander," said she, "I hae not forgotten ye; nor hae I forgotten the vows that hae passed between us, as my unhappy heart is a secret witness; and if I did wish to forget ye, it wouldna be possible. For, wherever I micht be, the remembrance o' you would come o'er my thoughts like the shadow o' a cloud passing across a river."

"And after it had passed, would it leave as little impression upon your heart, Flora, as the shadow o' a cloud does upon a river?"

"Alexander," she replied, "I am not gaun to argue wi' ye, for I canna. But oh, man, ye hae drawn your sword against your king—ye hae fought against him, ye hae been a traitor in the land that gave ye birth; and, as my faither says, they who are rebellious subjects will never mak good husbands, or be regulated by the ties o' domestic life."

"Flora," returned he, "I deny altogether that what your faither says is correct. But, even allowing that it were, I deny that I hae taken up arms against my king, or that I am a rebellious subject. We took up arms against injustice, tyranny, and oppression; and the king had previously taken up arms against us. Look at the whole conduct o' the Covenant army—hae they not always listened to every proposal o' the king, and trusted to his royal word as faithful subjects who were wishful to prove their attachment to his throne and person? But where can ye point out the instance that he has not fled from his engagement and deceived us, and showed us that his promises and his pledges were not stronger than burned straw? Even the last engagement which he has made, and by which he is to secure to us the rights we have sought for, prayed for, fought for, I believe he will break—he will try to evade it, and give us vengeance in its stead—and if he does so, I am no longer his subject, but his enemy, even though it

be at the sacrifice o' you, Flora; and rather than part wi' you, were it in my power, I would ten thousand times lay down my own life."

"Alexander," added she, "I haena forgotten the days when we were happy thegither, and when we neither thought o' kings nor o' onything else, but our twa sels. But now my faither forbids me to speak to ye; and I maun obey him. And though I think that, in the principles ye are following, ye are wrong, very wrong—yet, Alexander, be ye rebel, be ye what you will, there shall never be another name but yours dear to my heart—though we ne'er meet again."

"Dinna meet again, dearest!" cried he; "we will meet—we shall meet!—we shall be happy too! Never talk o' no meeting again." And they clung round each other's necks and wept.

They wandered lang backward and forward, forgetting how the hours flew during their lang, fond whispers; and Flora's father, attended by a servant man, came forth to seek her. He vehemently upbraided and threatened his daughter, and he as vehemently reviled Alexander. He called him by names that I couldna mention, and that he bore patiently; but he also spoke disrespectfully o' his mother—he heaped insults on the memory o' his dead faither. Alexander could endure no more; he sprang forward, he grasped him by the throat. He placed his hand upon his sword, which he still wore, and exclaimed, "Sir! there is a point to all endurance, and you have passed it!"

Flora rushed forward, she placed her hand on Alexander's arm—"Forbear!—what would you do?" she cried; "it is my faither!"

"Nothing!" he replied, calmly, yet sternly; "I would do nothing; I have borne much provocation, and acted rashly—for which rashness forgie me, Flora. When I first drew my sword to resist oppression, I vowed that, should I meet one that was dear to you in the ranks o' the oppressor

though his sword should pierce my body, mine should no be raised against him. Fareweel, dearest—happier days may come."

Four years had not passed, when the Covenanters found that they had but small cause to be satisfied wi' the promises and assurances o' the king. Provoked by his exactions, and his attempts at despotism, the people o' England had taken up arms against him. Montrose, who had been one o' the leaders o' the Covenant party, though a man possessed o' wonderfu' military talents, was to the full as ambitious as he was clever; and he hadna principle aneugh to withstand royal promises, smiles, and flattery; he therefore turned traitor to the cause in which he had at first embarked, and he turned the arms o' his Highlanders, and a body o' fierce Irishmen, against the men whom, three years before, he had led to battle. Again many o' the Covenanters rushed to arms, and amongst them the sons o' Alice Cockburn.

They served as musketeers under Sir James Scott, and fought side by side at the battle of Tippermuir. When, through the treachery o' some, and the want o' management o' others, the Covenanters were put to flight, the little band o' musketeers, seeking refuge in some ruined buildings, kept up an incessant fire upon the forces o' Montrose, as if resolved to sell their lives at the dearest price. Montrose, after many efforts finding that they would not surrender, put himself at the head o' a powerful body o' Athole men, and rushed upon the gallant band, who defended themselves like lions at bay. O' the five brothers, who fought side by side, four fell; and the youngest only was left, like a' servant o' Job of old, to tell the tidings. When Alexander beheld the dead bodies o' his brothers lying around him, sorrow and revenge raged in his breast together. His fury became as the fury o' a tiger that is robbed o' its young. He dashed into the midst o' his enemies—he pressed forward to where

Montrose was, crying, "Vengeance! vengeance!" he reached him—they engaged hand to hand. Montrose was pressed against a wall o' the ruins.

"Fause traitor! renegade!" exclaimed Alexander—"here shall I die, the avenger o' my country and my brothers' blood!"

His sword was uplifted to strike, when a body o' Athole men rushing to the rescue o' their commander, the sword was shivered in Alexander's hand, and he was made prisoner.

Several who had heard the words which he had applied to their leader, and had seen his hand raised against his life, insisted that his punishment should be death; and in justification o' their demand, they urged the threat o' the Covenanters to do the same by whosoever Montrose might send to treat wi' them.

A sort o' court-martial was accordingly held, and the fettered prisoner was brought forth before a tribunal who had already agreed upon his sentence. He, however, looked his judges boldly in the face. His cheeks were not blanched, nor did his lips move with fear; he heard the charges read against him—the epithets that had been applied to Montrose, who was the king's representative—and that he had raised his sword against his life. He daringly admitted his having applied the epithets—he repeated them again; and, raising his clenched and fettered hands in the face of his judges, he justified what he had said; and he regretted that his sword had been broken in his hand before it had accomplished the deed which he desired.

Montrose drew his brows together, and glanced upon him sternly; but the young prisoner met his gaze with a look of scorn.

"Away with him," said his judges; to-morrow, let him be brought forth for execution. His fate shall be an example to all rebels."

During the night which he had heard to be pronounced the last o' his existence, and throughout which he heard the heavy tramp o' the sentinel pacing before the place o' his confinement, he mourned not for his own fate; but the tears ran down his cheeks when he thought o' his poor widowed, desolate, and unfriended mother!

"Oh, who," he exclaimed—"who will tell her that her bairns are wi' the dead!—that there's not one left, from the auldest to the youngest!—but that her husband and her sons are gone—a' gone! My mother!—my poor mother!" Then he would pause, strike his hand upon his bosom, lean his brow against the wall o' the apartment, and raising it again, say, "And Flora, too—my ain betrothed! who will tell, who will comfort her? Her father may bear the tidings to her; but there will be nae sympathy for me in his words, nae compassion for her sorrow. Oh! could I only have seen her before I died—had there been any ane by whom I could hae sent her some token o' my remembrance in death, I would hae bared my breast to the muskets that are to destroy me without regret. But to die in the manner I am to do, and not three-and-twenty yet! Oh, what will my poor Flora say?"

Then, folding his arms in wretchedness, he threw himself upon the straw which had been spread as a bed for his last night's repose.

Early on the following day he was brought forth for execution. Hundreds o' armed men attended as spectators o' the scene; and, as he was passing through the midst o' them, he started, as he approached one of them who stood near to Montrose, and he exclaimed, "Mr. Stuart!"

He stood still for a few moments, and approaching the person whose appearance had startled him—"Mr. Stuart," he added, "ye hae long regarded me as an enemy, and as a destroyer o' your peace; but, as one, the very minutes o' whose existence are numbered and as one for whom ye

once professed to hae a regard, I would make one sma' request to ye—a dying request—and that is, that ye would take this watch, which is all I hae to leave, and present it to your daughter, my ain betrothed Flora, as the last bequest and token o' remembrance o' him to whom her first, her only vow was plighted."

It was indeed the father o' Flora he addressed, whose loyalty had induced him to take up arms with Montrose; but he turned away his head, and waved back his hand, as Alexander addressed him, as though he knew him not.

Montrose heard the words which the prisoner had spoken, and, approaching Mr. Stuart, he said, "Sir, our young prisoner seems to know ye—yea, by his words, it seems that ye were likely to be more than friends. Fear not to countenance him; if ye can urge aught in his favour—yea, for the services ye have rendered, if ye desire that he should be pardoned—speak but the word, and he shall be pardoned. Montrose has said it."

"My lord," said Stuart, "I will not stand in the way o' justice—I would not, to save a brother! I have nothing to say for the young man."

And, as he turned away, he muttered, loud enough to be heard, "Let him meet his appointed doom, and ye will extinguish the last o' a race o' incorrigible rebels."

"Youth," said Montrose, addressing Alexander, "from the manner in which ye addressed Mr Stuart, and the way in which he has answered my inquiries respecting ye, it is evident to me that the turbulent spirit o' the times has begotten a feeling between ye which ought not to exist; and, through your quarrel, the heart o' a gentle maiden may be broken. But I shall have no part in it. I think," he added, in a low tone, "I have seen your face before. When the lot fell upon me to be the first to cross the Tweed at Hirselhaugh into England, are ye not the stripling that was the first to follow me?"

"I am," replied Alexander; "but what signifies that, my lord? *ye have since crossed the water in an opposite direction!*"

Montrose frowned for a moment; but his better nature forced him to admire the heroism of his prisoner; and he added, "Consent to leave the rebellious cause into which you have plunged—embrace the service of your king, and you are pardoned—you shall be promoted—the hand of the maiden whom you love shall be yours. I will be surety for what I have said."

Alexander remained silent for a few minutes, as though there were a struggle in his bosom what he would say; at length, turning his eyes towards Montrose, he answered, "What, my lord! turn renegrade like you!—desert the cause for which my father and my brethren have laid down their lives! Wi' a' the offers which ye hold out—and tempting one o' them is—I scorn life at such a price. Let them lead me to execution; and I have but one request to make to ye. Ye have heard the favour which I besought o' that man, and which he refused to grant"—as he spoke he pointed to the father of Flora. "Will ye inform his daughter that Alexander Cockburn met death as became a man—that his last thoughts were o' her—that his last breath breathed her name!

"You shall not die!" exclaimed Montrose, impatiently; "I will not so far gratify your pride. Conduct him to Perth," added he, addressing those who guarded the prisoner; "and let him be held in safe keeping till our further pleasure is known concerning him."

He had admired the dauntless spirit which young Cockburn displayed, and he sought not his life, but he resolved, if it were possible, to engaged him in his service.

For many weeks, Alexander remained as a prisoner in Perth, without hope of rescue, and without being able to learn which cause prevailed—the King, the Parliament, or

the Covenant—for the Civil war was now carried on by three parties. At length, by daily rubbing the iron bars o' his prison window wi' some sort o' soap which he contrived to get, they became so corroded, that the stanchels yielded to his hands as rotten wood. He tore the blankets that covered him into ribands, and, fastening them to a portion o' ane o' the broken bars, lowered himself to the street.

It was night and he fled to the quay—and found concealment in the hold of a vessel, which, on the following day, sailed for London.

But it is time to return to Alice—the widowed, the all but childless mother. Day after day she prayed, she yearned, that she might obtain tidings of her children; but no tidings came. Sleep forsook her solitary pillow, and, like Rachel, she wept for her children because they were not. But a messenger of evil at length arrived, bearing intelligence that four of her sons had fallen in battle, and that the fifth, her youngest, had been made prisoner, and was sentenced to die.

"My cup o' wretchedness is full," cried the bereaved mother; "have I none left—not one—not even my Alexander, my youngest, the comfort o' my age? But I must submit. It is for the best—it is a' for the best, or it wadna be. I should rejoice that I hae been chastened, and that my affliction has been for a cause that will confer liberty o' conscience on posterity, and freedom on our poor distracted country. But oh, I canna forget, my heart winna do it, that I was ance a wife—that I was a mother, and had five sons, the marrow o' whom ye wouldna hae found in a' the Merse, but now my husband is not, and my bairns are not, and I am a lone widow, wearying to be wi' them, and wi' no ane here to speak to me! Yet I ought not to murmur! —no! no! It was me that urged them to go forth and fight the good fight; but, strong as my zeal then was—oh,

human nature and a wife's, a mother's feelings, are strong also!"

But Alice, in the day o' her distress, found a comforter, and one that sympathised wi' her in all her sorrows, in one whom she had but small right to expect to be a freend. When she was left to mourn in solitude, wi' but few to visit her, there was one who came to condole wi' her, and who, having once visited her, was seldom absent from her side—and that was Flora Stuart, the betrothed o' her youngest son, o' whom she had spoken rashly.

"Oh, bairn," said she, addressing Flora, "little, little indeed, does Alice Cockburn deserve at yer hands!—for but for me, and my puir Alexander might this day hae been in life, and held yer hand in his. But forgie me, hinny! It was in a guid cause that I hae sacrificed a' that was dear to me in this warld—only, it was a sair, sair stroke upon a mother!"

Flora strove to comfort her; but it was in vain. She didna repine, neither did she murmur as those who have no hope; but her health, which had never been what doctors would call robust, was unable to stand the shock which her feelings had met wi'; and, in a few weeks after hearing o' the deaths o' her children, Alice Cockburn was gathered wi' the dead, and Flora Stuart accompanied her body mourning to the grave.

I have mentioned that Alexander concealed himself on board a vessel which sailed for London. He had been three days at sea before he ventured from the place o' his concealment, and the captain himself being the son o' a Covenanter, he was conveyed to the great city in safety. He had been but a short time in London, when, meeting with a gentleman who belonged to the neighbourhood o' Dunse, he learned that his mother was dead, and that his father's brother, believing that he was dead also, had taken possession o' the property.

Alexander had never had the same religious feelings in the cause in which he had been engaged, that his father and his brothers had. He fought for the sake o' what he called liberty, rather than for any feeling o' conscience; and his ruling passion was a love o' warlike adventures. He, therefore, had been but a short time in London, when he joined the Parliamentary army; and his courage and talents soon drew upon him the notice o' Cromwell, and others o' the Parliamentary leaders.

It was about six years after the battle o' Tippermuir, when one, who was supposed to be a spy from the royalists, fell into the hands o' a party belonging to the Parliamentary army. He was examined, and evidence bearing strongly against him, that he had come amongst them secretly to pry out where the army would be most vulnerable, and, if possible, to entrap them into the hands o' their enemies, was produced against him. He was examined a second time, and letters were found concealed about his person which left no doubt o' his being a spy. Some voted that he should be immediately punished with death; but, while all agreed in the nature o' the punishment that ought to be inflicted, there were some who proposed that the execution o' his sentence should be deferred for a few days, until the arrival o' their commanding officer, who was then absent.

During the days that he was thus respited, a daughter o' the spy arrived, and flinging herself upon her knees before the officers who had condemned him, she besought them, with tears, that they would spare her father's life. Her distress might have moved a heart o' stone. Before them they beheld youth, beauty, loveliness, bathed in misery—bowed down wi' distress. They saw her tears falling at their feet—but they had been used to tears o' blood, and her wretchedness moved them not. All that they could say to her was that their superior officer was not present, and,

with the evidence which they had to submit before him, they could not revoke the sentence they had passed.

On the third day, the chief officer o' the party arrived. All that had been proved against the prisoner was told to him, and the papers that had been concealed about him were placed before him. He was about to pronounce the words, "He shall surely die," when, pausing, he commanded that the prisoner should be brought before him.

The doomed one was accordingly ushered into his presence. When the officer beheld him approach, he started up.

"Can it be possible?" he exclaimed—"Mr Stuart?" and gasped as he spoke.

The prisoner also started at hearing his true name, and raising his head said, "It is possible! Alexander Cockburn, I am your prisoner—*It is your turn now!*"

The officer, who was chief in command o' the party, was none other than Alexander Cockburn, the young Covenanter, and the doomed spy was Mr Robert Stuart, the father o' Flora.

"Sir," said Alexander, "my turn is indeed come—it is come to prove to you, that as generous feelings may kindle in the eyes that are barely shaded by the blue bonnet o' a Covenanter as in those that look proudly from beneath the gay beaver o' a cavalier. There was a time when I stood as you were like to have done now, wi' but a few ticks o' a watch between me and eternity—the watch that ye refused to take from my hand; and when but the expression o' a wish from your lips was all that was required to obtain my pardon, my freedom—and that wish ye wouldna express."

"I ken it, lad! I ken it!" cried the prisoner; but I am in your power now; take your revenge—do by me as I would have done by you!"

"No, Mr Stuart!" replied the other, "vengeance belongs not to me. But I rejoice that, in this instance, for the sake

o' one whose name I dare not mention here, I have the power o' pardoning. Soldiers, unloose his hands—he is free—he is forgiven."

The soldiers did as they were commanded.

"Alexander Cockburn!" exclaimed the late captive, "will you make me appear more contemptible than a worm in my own eyes? A minute has not passed since you reminded me how I hated you, and how deadly I showed my hatred. The remembrance o' the occasion on which I showed that feeling has been like a biting adder in my breast ever since; and now to receive life at your hands would be to make my future existence a mixture o' wormwood and gall."

"Say not so," said Alexander, stepping forward, and taking his hand. "I would speak with you in private."

At that moment a voice was heard without, crying, "Let me pass!—pray, let me pass!—let a daughter intercede with your officer for the life of a father!"

"Sir, sir!" exclaimed Alexander, "it is *her!*—it is *her!* My Flora's voice!" And he rushed to the door to meet her.

"Flora!—my own Flora!" he continued; "your father is free—he is forgiven—he shall live! What! do you not know me? I am your own Alexander."

"Alexander!" she cried, springing forward to meet him; and, yielding to the natural feelings o' the man, her father ran towards them, and embraced them both.

My story (said the schoolmaster) is now at a close. Alexander gave up his commission in the Parliamentary army. It was low-water mark wi' the king's people, and Mr Stuart accompanied him; and need I tell ye, that so did Flora. They had abundance to keep them comfortable; and, on the day after they arrived at Dunse, she took them to the kirkyard, and showed them the clean white headstone o' Alice Cockburn.

"Bless ye for this, my ain wife," said Alexander, while the tears were in his een, and he raised her hand to his lips.

I have only to add (continued the narrator), that I, Simon Cockburn, am the great-grandson o' Alexander Cockburn and Flora Stuart.

THE OLD CHRONICLER'S TALES

THE PRINCE OF SCOTLAND.

THE character of David, Earl of Carrick, better known by the title of Duke of Rothsay, is one of those which nature seems to delight in distributing among nations at distant periods, apparently with the view of teaching mankind, that, however brilliant may be the powers of mind with which an individual is endowed, however captivating the qualities of his person, his sparkling wit, his graceful manners, and polite conversation; and however amiable the generosity, liberality, and feeling of his heart—though all combined with high rank, and even the station of a king—he has no charter of immunity from the obligations of ordinary life; and that, if he endeavours, by the aid of these, to turn serious things into frolic, and force a pastime from the sanctions of religious or moral duty, he must pay the usual forfeit of a departure from the rights of nature, and suffer destruction.

This young prince, it is well known, was the son of Robert III. of Scotland, who allowed the reins of government to be wrested from his feeble hands by the cunning and powerful Duke of Albany. The feebleness of the father was not inherited by the son. Rothsay had powers of mind which were equal to the management of a kingdom; and these, there is reason to suppose, he would have displayed for the advantage of his country, if the current of events in which he was involved had not been influenced by his uncle, Albany, and turned to suit his schemes of ambition. The indications of great talent which, in early youth, he exhibited, were hailed by his father with pride and satisfac-

tion; but by his uncle, the governor, with well-founded fear and suspicion. Unfortunately, it soon appeared that the fertility of the soil did not limit its powers of production to the nobler and more useful plants. Along with the prince's great powers of intellect, there arose a love of pleasure which could be gratified only—such was its insatiable character—by every species of extravagant sally and wild frolic. His heart was untainted by any inclination to injure seriously the health, reputation, or interests of any individual, however humble; but, unfortunately, when a love of enjoyment took possession of him, all his intellectual powers, as well as some of his moral perceptions, were abused or overlooked, and a character naturally generous was shaded by the faults of vicious intemperance.

To make all this the more to be regretted, young Rothsay was a beautiful youth. His voice was full and melodious, capable of being exerted—and he had the art to do it—in exciting, by the strains of exquisite music, the tenderest feelings of the heart. His manner had in it the affability of a free romping girl, with the grace and dignity of a young prince. His hilarity seemed to have no interval, and his good-humour was scarcely capable of being disturbed. His love of amusement, and his genius in contriving schemes for the promotion of the happiness of his friends and associates, made his company the desire of the aged and the envy of the young. Yet, amidst all this, it was remarked as wonderful, that he seldom lowered the dignity of his rank. Even his frolics were those of a prince, and his humblest acts were performed with that consummate grace which can lend a charm to what, in other hands, would incur the charge of vulgarity.

But, while these fair features often set off with greater effect the faults which inevitably flow from the indulgence of unlawful passions, Rothsay had the power of combining his good and evil, and so mixing up his passionate sallies of

intemperance or vicious sport with traits of generosity, humanity, and feeling, that it was often impossible to say whether some of his actions were good or bad, or whether the people who had apparently suffered from his unrestrained licentiousness would have escaped the injury to be deprived of the benefit which it produced from the calm reflection of the generous youth.

The friendship of Rothsay was extended to most of the young nobles of that period; but no one was so successful in securing his affections as Sir John de Ramorgny—a young man supposed to have come originally from France, and certainly justifying his extraction by his character. Originally bred to the church, he was learned beyond the nobles with whom he associated; and, while few could boast his erudition and knowledge, fewer still could cope with him in original powers of mind. But these powers were ill directed; for they were used only in base intrigues and vicious projects. A more dangerous friend or fatal enemy could not be found among insidious Frenchmen or the still savage Scots. His dissimulation, address, and elegance of personal appearance and manners, were all used, as occasion required, to cover or aid his designs of ambition, or his base seductions and purposes of revenge. Able for the weightier projects of war or diplomacy, and admirably adapted for court intrigue, he did not hesitate to descend to the most trifling and vulgar pleasures. He could play the murderer, the insidious betrayer, and the buffoon or mountebank, with equal address and with equal satisfaction. With these qualities, the more wicked and dangerous of which he could conceal, Ramorgny was easily able to recommend himself to Rothsay; and the affection with which he was treated by the prince was no doubt the effect of a similarity in manners and accomplishments, and a congeniality of humour, which the unsuspecting and generous prince mistook for an agreement of disposition.

Scotland is said to have been used from one end to the other, by these dissolute companions, as the theatre of their amusements. They wandered about in disguise, laying rich and poor, old and young, under contributions for their wild pastime. They were often for weeks associated with bands of wandering minstrels and female dancers, entering into their humours, playing on their instruments, learning the secrets of their wandering professions, and imitating their performances. The protean versatility of their powers rendered their extravagant exhibitions of easy accomplishment; while their hilarity and boisterous merriment, recommended by a profusion of money, made them welcome into whatever society of vagabonds they were ambitious of entering. Nor was it by merely courting the favours of these tribes that the companions were permitted to join in their revels. They were able to stand their ground on an equal footing of reckless hardihood, and, where occasion required, of pugilistic authority. They could sing and dance, swear and bawl, get drunk and fight, with the most profligate members of these outlawed associations.

These extravagances soon became known; and Queen Arabella, the young duke's mother, was greatly grieved that her eldest son, and the object of her dearest hopes and most anxious solicitudes, should act a part which, while it would alienate from him the hearts of the people, would enable his uncle Albany to continue longer his usurped dominion as governor of Scotland. An attempt was therefore made to unite him to the cares and solicitudes of office; and he was soon installed into that of lieutenant of the kingdom—a council being, at the same time, appointed to advise with him. This step was not followed by its expected benefits; for the governor did not consider it either as incompatible with the duties of his situation, or derogatory to the dignity of his high place, to resort to his old modes of pleasure and amusement. All that was required was a

greater degree of care employed upon the habiliments of his disguises; and the lord-lieutenant might have been detected joining in a rondeau with a singing girl, acting the fanfaron with a Hector, performing a daring croupade with a rope-dancer, or tripping to the sound of an Italian theorbo. In all these things he was still kept in countenance by Ramorgny; who, however, while he was joining him in his revels, was meditating schemes of villany and selfishness.

The affairs of state having thus little power in withdrawing the prince from his licentious companions and unbecoming practices, it was next suggested by the queen, that the restraining influence of a wife's affections might overcome his propensity for the outlawed pleasures to which he had become enslaved. The king seconded this measure; and without consulting the duke's sentiments, or ascertaining his taste in the choice of a wife, it was communicated to him that the interests of the nation required him to marry and provide an heir to the throne, and that his choice of a wife lay between Elizabeth Douglas, daughter of Archibald, Earl of Douglas, and Elizabeth of Dunbar, daughter of the powerful Earl of March. Neither of these ladies had ever been seen by the prince. It was surmised that he had a special favourite of his own, selected no doubt from a host of willing beauties with whom he associated; and the intelligence that he was called upon to resign his liberty into the hands of a woman he had never seen, could not be expected to be highly relished by a person of his spirit and habits of life.

Seeking Ramorgny, Rothsay communicated to him the intentions of his mother, and the commands of his father and the nation, and asked his advice in so trying an emergency.

"By your father's crown," cried Ramorgny, "I see nothing for it but to obey. The difficulty lies in the selection; for, if I am able to appreciate the beauty of woman, thou wilt

have to choose between a crow and a rook. Elizabeth of Dunbar is the descendant of Black Agnes, who defended that old castle, in the days of the Second David, against the arms of the Duke of Salisbury; and Elizabeth of Douglas cannot fail to have in her some portion of the blood of the Black Earl, who fell in Spain, trusting to the protecting charm of Robert's heart, which he carried with him in a casket. So thou seest the black choice thou hast got; and the matter is not mended by having two in thy option, if the old proverb carries faith, which sayeth, that 'Two blacks will not make a white.'"

"By the faith of a prince," replied the duke, "it is a black business; but thou hast been talking genealogically, good Ramorgny, while I wished to have thy opinion physically. Blood doth not follow the law of the mountain stream, by getting more muddy as it descends; neither are men and women of the nature of the gaffled cocks we use to fight at the mains on the Inch of Perth, which send down their fighting propensities to the tenth gallinaceous generation. The two Besses may be whiter than their progenitors, and of less pugnacious propensities!"

"Thy argument, good lieutenant," cried Sir John, "hath the goodly property of proving two things:—In the first place, it proves that the two Besses may have white skins; and, secondly, that thou mayest have a white liver; for, if courage hath no descent but in cocks, thou canst not boast of having the heart of the first Robert!"

"Hold! thou art too severe," cried Rothsay, "and not logical. Thou art mixing up actuality with potentiality—for that my liver is not white, is proved by the blue evidences I painted on thy back, when, in the gipsy tent at Bothwell, I fought thee for a kiss of the Brown morris-dancer, Marion of Leghorn, who, having given me the reward of my victory, dressed thy wounds for pity's sake, and then cudgelled thee for mine."

"I could turn thy argument against thee," answered Ramorgny; "for thy courage was so much at fault, that thou didst require the aid of an Italian morris-dancer to do that which good King Robert would have done himself. But we have wandered from the two Besses, whom it now behoves us to take up, and treat with more respect. What is thy course?"

"As lieutenant of Scotland, I commission thee, Sir John de Ramorgny, to repair to the castle of Dunbar, and thereafter to that of Douglas, to inquire into the qualities of Elizabeth of Dunbar and Elizabeth Douglas—to note the height of their persons—the hue of their skins—the colour of their eyes, and the nature of their dispositions; and thereafter to report as becometh a trusty and faithful commissioner of the king."

"Thou shalt be obeyed," answered Ramorgny; "but, if the commissioner may be allowed to judge of the matter of his mission, I would suggest that, in my opinion, thou hast left out the most important part of my instructions."

"What is that?" inquired the prince.

"The dowery, to be sure," answered Ramorgny. "What are complexions and dispositions, to golden acres? What careth the housewife, who wanteth strong broth, for the colour of the capon's tail?

"We will leave that to the queen," said the duke. "Her Majesty wisheth to put me up to sale, and to knock me down to the highest bidder. We can bring the earls up to within a few acres of each other, and of the two pigeons, both equally fat, and brought thus equally within shot, I, to please my fancy, may strike the fairest."

Ramorgny was satisfied, and proceeded on his mission. He first went to the residence of March, which at that time was in a castle situated near the town of Dunse; the castle of Dunbar having been, during the late wars, so much shattered, that it required to be put in a state of repair. Ra-

morgny's rank procured him admittance to the family of the earl, and his intimacy with Rothsay was a sufficient recommendation to entitle him to the greatest attention and respect. March viewed his visit as one of examination and discovery, and took the precaution to prepare his daughter to treat him as the friend and confidant of her future husband. A great dinner was got up in honour of the knight, at which Gawin, the earl's son, and Maitland, his nephew, were present, and all endeavoured, by every means in their power, to acquire the good-will of the prince's favourite. It was not these, however, that Ramorgny wished to study or to please. The daughter was his subject; and his knowledge of human nature soon enabled him to form an estimate of her character not far wide of the truth. She was dark, but beautiful; with a clear, burning eye, which occasionally exhibited flashes of the spirit of her ancestor, Black Agnes. Her temper was clearly that of a demon; her spirit, wild and untamed. When contradicted, her anger, notwithstanding the indications of the displeasure of her parents, burst forth with ungovernable energy. She disregarded the rules of ordinary politeness, by applying to her brother Gawin indecorous names. She scolded the servants; and even, on one occasion, when she had risen from table, and thought she was unobserved, she applied her fingers to the ears of a female, and pinched her till she screamed. The earl, who suspected what was going forward, beckoned to her; the lady winked; the son pulled her by the gown. Their efforts were unavailing. Ramorgny was satisfied that Elizabeth of Dunbar was a true scion of the stock of old Agnes.

The experience which Ramorgny had thus acquired was completely corroborated by the common report of the Borders, where the young lady went by the name of Black Bess of Dunbar. She was represented as an incarnation of Mahoun—a fiend, whom all the efforts of her father and mother, aided by their relatives, had not been able to sub-

due, or soften into the ordinary flexile consistence of mortals. The excuses which were made to the knight by the parents, that she was ill, and had a headache, and so forth, only tended to corroborate his experience and the report of others. His only wonder was, that the Earl of March could have thought of recommending such a female to the arms of a civilised man—to a prince. No one but March could have dared!

Ramorgny next directed his steps to the Castle of Douglas, to make his survey and examination in that quarter. He was received by Earl Archibald, who was now an old man, with much cordiality, and in a short time introduced to Elizabeth. The contrast between this lady and the one he had left was remarkable at first sight, and before she had opened her mouth to reply to the elegantly-polished compliments of the most accomplished man of his time. She was fair, with auburn hair and blue eyes; tall, and elegantly formed; imbued with so much of the spirit of a gentlewoman, that her whole figure, in its easy, flexile movements, seemed to obey the slightest touch of the presiding genius of grace and beauty. Ramorgny felt and acknowledged, with that rapidity with which men of the world can detect the indications of an elevated soul, the power of the mute eloquence of this exquisitely-formed complex piece of nature's machinery. But when the spirit spoke, and the combination of so many charms started into new life, responding in every turn and lineament to music that seemed to have been formed to give them additional grace, and apparently claiming the voice as their own individual expression, the effect was completed, to the disturbance of Ramorgny's feelings, and the flight of his peace. Her soft and gentle tones went straight to his heart. The silken cords of love were cast around him by every look, motion, and expression; and the prince's deputy became, in spite of himself, his rival.

Ramorgny felt disinclined to leave the castle. Every additional circumstance that came under his observation increased his passion. The prevailing character of Elizabeth's mind and feelings was extreme gentleness, softness, and sensibility, in which could be discovered no affectation of sentimentality. Her manner was natural and easy; and it was impossible to behold her for a moment, without being sensible that she was a creature formed to sacrifice herself, and her individual thoughts, wishes, and aspirations, to the happiness of the man who should be so fortunate as to secure her affections. This softness of manner extended itself to the style of her speech, which was slow, smooth, and natural, seeming to derive its sweetness from the perennial smile that played upon her lips.

Struck with an intense passion, Ramorgny forgot the object of his mission. The prince was only recollected as an unpleasant object that came between him and the object of his affections. He resorted to every means of cultivating the good opinion, if not the love, of the lady; but, handsome and gallant as he was—invested with the powers of French love-making, in all its details of conversation, protestation, and badinage—he could not satisfy himself that the gentle and bewitching manners of the lady received any accession, from any increase, in his favour, of the regard and attention she seemed to extend to all the visiters who frequented her father's castle. Ramorgny surveyed this equability of enchanting manner, with the pain of one who, fired with a strong passion, sees ordinary companions basking in the sunshine of favour which he wishes to be confined to himself. He felt pained, but the pain was an increase of passion, with a diminution of hope. His violent temper hurried him into secret cursing of the day on which he entered in so thankless an expedition; determinations to escape from his duty; and vows that he would secure Elizabeth's love, die, or sacrifice his prince.

Ramorgny's threats were no empty sounds. Restrained by no religion—no respect for laws—no terror of punishments—no fear of man—and despising reputation and honour as gewgaws for old women and children—he was fit for the execution of any measure, executed through treachery and blood, to gratify his passions. Chagrined by the manner of Elizabeth, which retained its torturing equability of gentleness and kindness, without any exhibition of partiality, he was ill prepared for a letter which arrived from the prince, chiding him for his delay; hinting, in his manner, that the rooks of Dunbar and Douglas had flown away with his heart, and requesting him to give up the chase, and return to his friend. He added, that he understood that his mother, the queen, had declared for the Douglas; and that he would take her, if she was as black as the good Sir James himself.

"If thou wilt," ejaculated Ramorgny, as he perused the letter, "thou shalt at least have the dowery of Ramorgny's sword!"

The incensed knight saw, in the midst of his passion, that little good would result from remaining at present longer at the castle. His efforts to produce a corresponding affection in the bosom of Elizabeth were unavailing. He resolved, therefore, to take his departure; and, having kissed the hand of his cruel mistress, and bid adieu to Lord Archibald, he departed. As he journeyed to Linlithgow, where he was to meet the duke, he occupied himself in deep meditation. His thoughts reverted continually to Elizabeth Douglas, whom he pictured to himself the loving and beloved wife of Rothsay, whose success with the fair he envied, but whose openness and generosity he despised as weakness. There already existed a rivalship between them as to the affections of a young lady who had eloped with Ramorgny from her father's house, but who afterwards left him for the more enchanting society of the young duke. This Ra-

morgny had borne with apparent indifference; but, though he was satisfied that the love of the damsel had not first been solicited by Rothsay, he could not forgive him his superiority of attraction, and imputed to him as a fault, what might, with more propriety, have been termed a misfortune. To lose another object of his affections, and that, too, by ministering to his own discomfiture, would ill become his character for intrigue, and ill accord with the present state of his love for the lady, and hatred for the rival. He must, therefore, endeavour to prevent the union between Rothsay and Elizabeth Douglas; and if that should fail, he was resolved that the loss of the lady would not involve the loss of his victim. His first step was to falsify his account of the two women; and in this he could not do better than reverse their attributes, and substitute Bess of Dunbar for the fair Douglas.

"Well, Ramorgny," cried the prince, as he met the knight in the audience-chamber of the palace, "what progress hast thou made in the south? Thy tarrying indicates enjoyment; for when did Ramorgny wait, when there was not something to afford him pleasure and amusement?"

"Your grace is right," answered Ramorgny. "The pleasures of March's castle are indeed intoxicating. But thou it was who didst send me in the way of temptation; and if Elizabeth of Dunbar has, by her enchantment, drawn largely on the time of thy commissioner, thou hast thyself to blame. Lord Salisbury, thou knowest, said that her predecessor's love-shafts—meaning the arrows she sent from the old castle walls—went straight to the heart; and, as the lieutenant of this kingdom, and the protector of its subjects, it was thy duty to guard me against a power which seems to be hereditary in the family of March."

"Oh, then, Black Bess is fair, after all!" cried the duke. "Give me thy hand. I am right glad on't; for I thought I had no choice—the one being fair, the other ugly; and

to have been forced to marry one woman, to the exclusion of the darling liberty of selection, would, though she had been as fair as Venus, have made her like the famed daughter of Phoreus, whose face was as beautiful as that of the sister of Apollo, but whose hair was writhing serpents."

"Thy choice, I fear, is not extended by the beauty of Elizabeth of Dunbar," said Ramorgny; "for what she has, Elizabeth Douglas wants. March's daughter is a dark beauty, but her colour is not derived from the dingy hues of earth; it owes a higher origin, even the beams of the son of Latona himself. Yet the jet eyes from which she sends her hereditary love-shafts are the softest engines of death I have ever witnessed. The fire she steals from heaven comes from her as it does from her cognate thief, Phœbe, as soft as moonbeams. Her gentleness is that of the lamb, and the tones of her voice are like the soft strains that come from an Æolian harp, making the heart chase them as they steal away into death-like silence."

"Bravo!" cried the prince—"a right good wench. I have ever admired softness in a woman; and I still maintain that there is the same natural fitness in that ordination, as existeth in the connection between heat and fire, light and flame, mirth and life, darkness and death! What sayest thou now to the other Bess?"

"Hast thou ever read of Omphale," replied the knight, "who took from Hercules his club, and gave him a spindle, and when he complained, chastised him with her slipper? It was well for the hero that he did not live in Scotland in these days, when brogues, filled with nails, cover the soft feet of some of our damsels. Elizabeth Douglas would certainly imitate Omphale; but, I fear, her slipper would be a brogue; and she farther differeth from her, in being as ugly as she was fair. She seemeth to me to be a limb of the devil, which, in its hurry to escape from the region of fire

and brimstone, carried along with it some of these elements of wrath, of which, I doubt not, she would make good use, if a husband dared to say to her nay, in place of yea. Thou hast said that thou lovest softness in woman; but I have heard thee say, in thy mad freaks—wherein, doubtless, reason had no part—that thou wouldst rejoice in an opportunity of taming a shrew. Truly, thy wish, at least to the extent of making an attempt, may be gratified by marrying Bess Douglas; but I would rede thee to consider, that she might tame *thee*. Dost thou observe the difference there? Ha! the noble and high-spirited Rothsay pinned, like a silken nose-cloth, to the skirt of the linsey-woolsey tunic of a modern Xantippe!"

"Never fear, Ramorgny," cried the duke, impatiently; "thy efforts in my behalf will save me this degradation. I am obliged to thee for thy warning, and would repay thee, according to the measure of my gratitude and thy desert, by recommending to thee as a wife Elizabeth Douglas, while I will wed her of Dunbar."

The art by which Ramorgny thus sustained, apparently with good-humour, his conversations with the duke regarding subjects which lay very near his heart, and invested with serious import, was one of his cleverest but most deceitful qualities. The duke himself treated everything lightly; the unrestrainable buoyancy of his mind cast off with resilient power everything which partook of a sombre character; but Ramorgny was naturally dark, gloomy, and thoughtful; and his efforts at frolic, successful as they were, were resorted to only as a means to accomplish an end. In the present instance, he was necessitated, notwithstanding the intensity of his passion, his vexation, and disappointment, to keep up his old manner; for, where truth was generally arrayed in the trappings of frivolity, deceit might have been suspected in an appearance of sincerity.

Fortunately, however, the prince was not left altogether

to the advice of Ramorgny; but such is the fate of princes—he got counsel otherwise, only in the suspicions he entertained of an enemy, his uncle Albany. Having heard that he wished him to marry Elizabeth Douglas, and to accompany him to Douglas Castle to see the lady on a certain day, the prince, to escape the importunities of his uncle, and to gall him—a pastime in which he took some pleasure—rode off precipitately to March's castle, to enjoy the society of Elizabeth, in whom he expected to find all the qualities described by his friend, who enjoyed his absolute confidence.

When Rothsay arrived at the castle of March, the earl was on the eve of setting out for Linlithgow, for the purpose of seeing him. The behaviour of Elizabeth in presence of Ramorgny had filled March with solicitude as to the issue of the projected match; and he wished to counteract, as far as possible, the accounts which the favourite would, in all likelihood, give of his self-willed daughter. On seeing the prince, he began to entertain hopes that Ramorgny's account was not so unfavourable as he suspected; but his surprise may be imagined, when, in a short conversation he had with the prince previous to his introduction to the ladies, he ascertained that Ramorgny's eulogistic description of Elizabeth had filled him with an irresistible desire to see so beautiful and gentle a creature. March looked askance at the prince, conceiving that he was making him and his family the subject of an ill-timed frolic; but he saw nothing in the face of the prince but the gravest sincerity that his versatile temperament could exhibit. It is not difficult to make doubtful facts quadrate with wishes; and March soon became satisfied that the prince had received a favourable account, and was deeply impressed with a sense of the beauty and merits of his daughter. He immediately introduced him to Elizabeth, according to the request of the prince; but it was not until he had got a gentle hint, that

he showed any inclination to leave them together—a piece of etiquette reckoned due to a lover who had been proposed as the husband of his daughter.

Pleased with the dark beauty, though unable to observe in her eye the Cynthian beam so elaborately described by Ramorgny, the prince approached the damsel, and, with that air of gallantry for which he was so remarkable, fell at her feet, and, seizing her hand, said, in one of his sweetest accents—

"I know not, gentle damsel, whether I have any authority thus to sue for a slight indication of thy favour; but what may be refused by thy goodness to a lover not yet permitted to approach thee with confidence, may perhaps be granted to the lieutenant of the king. The triumphs of beauty are best celebrated by favour; and condescension, which is the prettiest foil of excellence, is exhibited to the kneeling knight, by extending a hand to grace the act of his rising to receive it."

"Thou mayst e'en rise how and when thou wilt," replied Elizabeth, snatching from him her hand; "or thou mayst kneel there till brown Marion of Leghorn or Jean Lindsay of Rossie comes to help thee up. I care no more for a general lover than I do for a general lieutenant. The only difference I see between them is, that the one hath many female slaves, and the other many male ones. By the soul of Black Agnes, I shall love no man who loveth more than one woman!"

This speech soon raised the prince to his feet. He stared at the damsel, doubtful if she was serious, or if he had his senses. Her seriousness was clear enough; for she finished her speech by a stamp of her foot and a clenching of the hand, suitable accompaniments of a female's oath.

"Art thou Elizabeth of Dunbar, the gentle daughter of the Earl of March?" said the prince, hesitatingly.

"They say so," replied Elizabeth; "and it is to that

reputation I owe a prince's visit. I was born shortly after the sacking of Roxburgh by my father; and, if I have any reputation for being gentle, as thou termest me, it may be owing to my birth having followed so close upon that famous occasion, on which mothers mourned the murder of their children, and children hung at the breasts of their dying or dead mothers. There is none of these things in our days: the world gets effeminate; and, in place of women defending castles, and wiping the dust from the battlements with their white handkerchiefs, as my ancestor did at Dunbar, they teach the arts of spinning and knitting to the men, who, with the Prince of Scotland at their head, vie with each other in the softness of their skin and the smoothness of their speeches. How would Black Agnes have answered to the speech thou didst now address to her descendant, thinkest thou?"

"Very likely," replied the prince, "in the way in which she answered the English who attacked her castle, or perhaps in the gentle way in which thou hast done."

"Would that all men-spinsters were answered in the same way!" rejoined Elizabeth. "But I would make a distinction: to men who have the boldness to court women as they would attack a castle, I would speak softly; but to the white-lipped simperers of smooth sayings, who attack the heart with a tempest of sighs, and sap its foundations with floods of tears, I would open the sally-port of my indignation, and kill them with a look."

"Then, I suppose," said the prince, "I owe my life to thy ladyship's mercy, extended by way of tender exception to my individual case?"

"Say rather that thou owest it to my contempt," replied Elizabeth. "Thou hast not yet experienced one of my looks. I have treated thee tenderly because of the love I bear to Queen Arabella, thy mother, to whom I would beg leave to commit thee for a farther supply of that milk-and-bread-

berry, of which, as thy sallow cheeks indicate, thou hast been cheated in thy infancy. Do not object that thou art too old; for thy present condition is but an extension of childhood—even now I have heard thy rattle."

"Women are privileged," replied the prince, losing temper.

"So are children," rejoined Elizabeth, smartly; "when thou hast arrived at manhood, thou mayest then claim my indignation; meantime I recommend thee to the queen."

And, saying this, she left the astonished prince standing in the chamber like a statue. Recovering himself, he left the castle precipitately, without seeing the earl, biting his lips, and muttering curses against Ramorgny, who had deceived him, and Elizabeth, who had insulted him. As he proceeded on his way homewards, he bethought himself of the different characters Ramorgny gave the two ladies; and wishing to give him credit for having confounded the attributes applicable to each, he resolved to see Elizabeth Douglas; and, changing his course, proceeded in the direction of Castle Douglas.

His arrival at the residence of the old earl, who had contributed to place his family on the throne, brought into the mind of the prince some recollections which evolved feelings which were deeply planted in his nature, and only prevented from producing useful and amiable effects, by lawless habits borrowed from dissolute companions. With his mind elevated by noble aspirations, and high hopes of being one day an ornament to his country, which he sincerely loved, he was in an excellent mood for appreciating the virtues and beauty of a woman who could, as a consort, make him a better and a happier man, and, by a necessary consequence, a better governor, and subsequently a good king. He met Elizabeth Douglas at a distance from the castle, and introducing himself in the easy and elegant manner of which no man of his time was more capable, was delighted with

her conversation, and inspired by her personal charms. Proceeding together to the castle, they were met at the gate by the old earl, who complimented Rothsay, as well as his daughter, by saying that all he had sighed for was that they should meet and be able to appreciate each other's qualities; for he was assured that one hour's conversation between persons so accomplished, actuated by such motives, and inspired with such sentiments, would do more to procure an attachment than a year's diplomacy and court intrigue.

Rothsay willingly remained for some time at the castle, and had frequent opportunities of conversing with Elizabeth alone, and of appreciating her noble qualities.

"I had got thee misrepresented to me," said the prince; "but I believe unintentionally, and by a transposition of names. What would Elizabeth Douglas think, if she were informed that she was likened to the wife of Socrates, and the slipper-castigator of Hercules?"

"I should conceive that the reporter did not know me," answered Elizabeth, "or wished to deceive. I am not an admirer of either of these ladies, of whom I have before heard; but I plume not myself upon any other quality than a wish to use my wealth and station for the benefit of those who, though better and holier than I am, have, by the force of dire necessity, been obliged to bow their necks under the yoke of poverty and misfortune. Yet I fear all I can take credit for is a wish to do good. My actions and my aspirations have not that accordance I could wish; but, by the blessing of God, I hope to improve in my self-discipline; and, in the meantime, I trust no one will be able to accuse me of injuring the humblest of God's creatures."

"How seldom do these sentiments reach the ears of royalty," said Rothsay, whose heart swelled with his genuine sentiments, long concealed, "and especially from the lips of nobility! Yet, pleasant as it is to contemplate goodness in mortals born of sin, it is difficult to estimate the extent of

the influence of generous sympathy when it is found in the bosom of beauty. Do not pain me by saying I flatter thee. At present I am not the gay son of King Robert; but by the wand of enchantment changed for a season—would it were for ever!—into a sober reasoner on the rights and claims of suffering humanity."

"Report hath not belied thee, good prince, though it hath me; for I have ever heard that thy sentiments were generous—though, excuse my boldness, they were not allowed to be called forth into action by the scenes of common life. Believe a simple maiden, when she taketh the liberty humbly to suggest, that royalty itself may be more ennobled by one act of charity than by a glorious victory."

"Sweet maiden," cried the prince, seizing rapturously her hands, "thou shalt be my counsellor. Thy sentiments shall be enforced by thy beauty, and my heart and my exchequer be equally under the power of thy generous feelings."

By such conversations, Rothsay gained an insight into the heart of his mistress. He recurred frequently to the report of Ramorgny, and hinted to the earl that he had found his daughter the very reverse of what she had been represented to him. The earl paid particular attention to the hint, and seemed inclined to insinuate that Ramorgny might have had some cause to misrepresent Elizabeth. The duke, having proceeded so far, felt his curiosity excited to get an explanation of the earl's remark; and, upon further question, ascertained that, according to the earl's opinion, which had been corroborated by his daughter, Ramorgny had been inspired with a strong passion for Elizabeth, which showed itself in various forms, and was the cause of his protracted stay at the castle. This discovery changed, in a great measure, all the prince's feelings towards his old friend. He had thus convicted him of deception, practised with a view to his injury, and for the purpose of gratifying a passion che-

rished for the intended wife of his friend and his prince. Amidst all their departures from the rules of sober life, the prince had never himself been guilty, or patronised in his friend, any breach of truth and good faith; and this was the first occasion on which this great cementing principle of mankind had been sacrificed to private interest. Seriously, however, as he felt it, he resolved upon stating it to Ramorgny in such a way as might not produce his emnity; for he had seen enough of him, to be satisfied that he was more capable of forming a worse enemy than he was of becoming a true friend.

While the prince had thus been engaged in the south, Ramorgny had been in the north, enjoying his favourite pastime of hunting the red deer among the hills surrounding the water of Islay. The friends arrived in Edinburgh about the same time, ignorant of each other's motions—Ramorgny still labouring under the effect of the passion with which Elizabeth Douglas had inspired him, and for a partial relief from whose engrossing influence he had gone to the hills; and the duke smarting under the pain of a breach of confidence and friendship in one on whom he had so long placed his affections, and bestowed many favours.

"The hills of Scotland," said Ramorgny, "are exquisite renovators of a town-worn constitution. The roes of the Highlands supply the strength which has been wasted on the town hinds. Thou hadst better have been with me, exerting the powers of a master over the inhabitants of the forest, than stooping to the counsel of that grave batch of seniors appointed to advise with thee—that is, to dictate to thee—on the affairs of the state. Believe me, prince, thou shouldst cashier these greybeards. Thy own judgment, aided by mine, is quite sufficient to enable thee to govern this small barbarous kingdom."

"Thy advice," replied the prince, smiling, with some indication of satire, "if followed, by rejecting the counsel of

my constituted advisers, would be an advice to reject advice contrary to thy advice; for my council recommend me to marry Elizabeth Douglas, and to reject the March. Dost thou think that any of the greybeards—Albany is too ambitious to marry again—have any private intentions on Bess of Dunbar. If I thought that, I would reject the Douglas, and betake myself to the March."

"And thou wouldst act sagely in so doing," replied Ramorgny, who did not yet see the prince's satire. "If any one of these counsellors act from such a motive—and I am not sure of Arran—he ought to lose his mistress and his head at the same time."

"Sayest thou so, Ramorgny?" replied the prince. "Is it thy heart that so speaketh, or thy judgment? Thou hast recommended me to the March, whom I have seen and conversed with, and well know, and hast endeavoured to terrify me from the Douglas, whom I have also seen, and can well appreciate. Art thou quite sure thy advice is purer, sounder, truer, and wiser, than that of my council?"

This question produced an evident effect upon Ramorgny. He endeavoured to escape the prince's eye; but he found that no easy matter. Rothsay kept looking at him intensely, and plainly showed that he was master of the secret purpose for which he had endeavoured to precipitate him into a connection that would have made him miserable for life. It was now, however, too late for Ramorgny to retreat; and, boldly facing his danger, he replied—

"Thy question carries with it more than meets the ear. If I depreciated Elizabeth Douglas, and overrated Elizabeth Dunbar, a spirit of liberal construction would give me credit for having been myself deceived."

"Stop!" said the prince, interrupting him. "I did not say that thou didst depreciate the one and overrate the other. Why take guilt to thyself?"

"By St Duthos," cried Ramorgny, who now saw he was

caught, and resolved upon another tack, "it is time now to be grave! Will that cursed spirit of devilish frolic which I learned from thee cling to me, even after the dreadful apparition of the first grey hair, which this morning appeared to me in my glass? But thou art thyself to blame. A master of mirth thyself—the prime minister of Momus, as well as of King Robert, and my professor in the science of fun—wert thou unable to discover, in my outrageous and elaborate description of the two damsels, the traces of the pencil—for Momus could paint—of the laughing god? If thou wert not, didst thou not deserve the harmless deception? Say, now, good prince, condemn, if thou darest, thy scholar of a proficiency which thou hast taught. Struck by thy own sword of lath, wilt thou amputate the offending hand? Say, and if thou wilt, strike. A philosopher would laugh—what shall the merry-making Rothsay do?"

The bold, dashing, laughing manner in which Ramorgny delivered this speech, joined to a recollection of the high-flown and not serious account he had given of the two damsels, drove out of the duke's mind the suspicions roused by the communications of Earl Douglas, and with it his anger. The boisterous good-humour of his friend carried him along with him; and, answering the knight in his own way, he cried—

"Why, laugh too, perhaps, good Ramorgny. Thou hast certainly defeated me in the first instance, but I have conquered thee in the second. I found in the women what thou hast described them; only I was obliged to substitute the name of Elizabeth Douglas for Bess of Dunbar. That descendant of old Agnes is most certainly the devil, or at least his viceregent. What dost thou think she recommended to me, to increase the powers of my manhood? Why, milk and panado! The only woman, she thought, I would be safe in the keeping of was my mother Arabella;

the age, of which she considered me a fair example, had retrograded from the days of the sacking of Roxburgh by her father, into a state of mature infancy; and as for our talents for war, she would scarcely allow us the mighty power of infanticide. In short, thy description of Elizabeth Douglas applied to her; and, when I say that thy description of her applied to the other, why should I say that I was charmed with the fair Douglas? Thou hast painted better than I can. She must be my wife; and I am glad that my council, my mother, and myself, thus agree on a point which they believe concerns the nation, but which I opine concerns only myself."

Ramorgny was at the moment well pleased to perceive that he had thus got out of the scrape; but to have his snare twisted round his own limbs—to have his description of his own lover adopted by a rival, in describing her perfections, and thus to have, in a manner, precipitated his own ruin—for he could not survive the marriage of Elizabeth Douglas with another—touched him, as an accomplished intriguer, on the tenderest parts of his nature. A second time deprived of the object of his affections by his own disciple in the art of love, he determined that, at least, there should never be a third opportunity for inflicting upon him such degradation. His revenge deepened, but his smiles and apparent good-humour quadrated with the increased necessity of concealing his designs. These and their fatal issue are unfortunately but too well known.

Untold to Rothsay, certain schemes had, in the meantime, been in agitation between the Earl of March and a party at court, the object of which was to get a match brought about between Rothsay and Elizabeth of Dunbar. These, for a time, wrought so favourably, that March, who never knew what had taken place between Rothsay and his daughter, entertained the strongest hopes of success. He had offered an immense dowery, which the great extent

of his estates near the Borders enabled him to pay, as the price of the connection with royalty; and it would seem that he had received from head-quarters strong pledges that his wishes would be gratified. Ramorgny secretly joined the March party; but all their endeavours could not prevent the final triumph of the Douglas, who had also offered a large sum with his daughter, and who was, besides, backed by the queen, and by the secret wishes of Rothsay himself.

The nuptials of the prince with Elizabeth Douglas were celebrated with great rejoicings at Edinburgh. They were graced by the presence of the king and the queen, and all the principal nobility of the land. Among the rest were to be seen two persons destined to supply afterwards the materials of an extraordinary chapter in the history of Scotland; the shadows of which, if presentiment had thrown them before, would have wrapped the gay scene of the marriage in the gloomy mantle of the dismal Atropos. The first of these was Rothsay's uncle Albany, who, ever since he was displaced from his governorship by the faction who awarded to the young prince the lieutenantcy of the kingdom, had prayed fervently for the death of the royal stripling, that had, with precocious audacity, dared to compete with disciplined age in the management of the affairs of the kingdom. The other was Ramorgny, who appeared at the celebration of the nuptials, dressed in the gayest style, and wearing on his lips the fallacious smile of the treacherous courtier, while his heart was filled with rage and jealousy, and his fancy teemed with schemes of deadly revenge. The picture, to one who could have seen into futurity, would have presented the extraordinary foreground of an apparent universal joy, filling all hearts and making all glad; and, close behind, the grinning furies of revenge writhing in their agonies of a wild desire to break in upon the unconscious victims, and spread death and desolation where pleasure was alone to be found.

Ramorgny, who knew the volatile nature of the prince, waited patiently until the pleasures of the first moon were experienced and exhausted. He cultivated more than formerly the good opinion of one who retained no longer any suspicion of the treachery of his friend. Ramorgny knew the prince's sentiments of his uncle—that there existed between the two relatives an inimical feeling, amounting, on the side of the uncle, to a hatred which, derived from thwarted political ambition, would not hesitate at short and ready measures of removing the object to which it was directed, and, on that of the nephew, to a youthful impatience of the surveillance and restraint which his late governor had exercised over him, and was still ready to employ, when his selfish purposes required their application. That Rothsay, who, in reality, possessed a noble and generous spirit, would stoop to any base purpose to get quit of the authority and interference of his uncle, Ramorgny did not suppose; but he hoped so far to implicate the thoughtless prince in a scheme of his devising, as to make his act appear, by misconstruction, of such a nature to Albany, as would give his revenge the specious appearance of self-defence, and accelerate the fate of his victim.

In accordance with this scheme, Ramorgny continued, as he had done formerly, to fill the prince's mind with details of his uncle's inimical feelings towards him; which was of the more easy accomplishment, that the prince was already aware of his uncle's disposition. The choleric youth listened to these tales with impatience, and often allowed himself to be hurried into extravagant expressions of indignation, which a servant of Ramorgny's, a servile creature, ready to commit any crime for money, was instructed, when occasion offered, to note and remember. For a time, Ramorgny limited his details to such acts as occasionally occurred, and which the unrestrainable hatred of Albany furnished in such abundance, that he found no great neces-

sity to have recourse to invention, unless it were, indeed, to add the colouring, which was generally of the most extravagant kind, and best suited to reach the heart of the prince, and influence his anger and indignation.

Farther Ramorgny could not venture for a long time to go. The generous youth sometimes got wearied with the recital of his uncle's indignities; and, willing to leave him to his own heart, kept on in the tenor of his own path; which, however, was none of the straightest—his aberrations after his marriage being, as before, the result of every new fancy which such men as Ramorgny, acting on an excited and irregular imagination, chose, by their consummate arts, to introduce into his mind. This did not suit Ramorgny. He required stronger materials to work with, and did not hesitate to use them. It is easy to work for evil in a heart originally corrupt; but to corrupt, and then to seduce, is a work of time; and it is to the credit of human nature that virtue is often strong enough to maintain its place against the attacks of the most insidious schemers.

It was now Ramorgny's effort to rouse the suspicions of the prince as to his personal safety from the designs of his uncle. He invented a story of a conversation which had been overheard between Albany and a ruffian often employed by him to execute his purposes of revenge. The import of this conversation was, that Albany, having been superseded in his office of governor, had resolved upon acquiring it again, and that he could not succeed in that resolution so long as the prince was alive—that he accordingly hinted to the ruffian that it would be pleasant to him if he heard that the duke no longer lived—and that, for such information, a reward would be given sufficient to stimulate the most scrupulous executioner that ever aided an unhappy man across the Stygian stream. All this was communicated to Rothsay by Ramorgny in a whisper, and with an appearance, tone, and manner suited to the awful nature of the

intelligence. The duke believed the story, and, bursting forth into an extravagant sally of indignation, cried—

"It is time that princes of the blood-royal should exert the power in defence of themselves, which is intrusted to them for the defence of others, when villains, in broad day, lay schemes for their lives. I can plainly see, and have long seen, that this man and I cannot live in the same age. Scotland is too narrow for us; and the viceroyal chair must be polluted with blood! Yet shall age supplant youth? Is it meet that time should go backwards, and that, by force and through blood, the order of nature should be changed? It shall not be so! If one is to fall, nature herself points out the victim—and that victim is Albany!"

These words, uttered in anger, and intended merely to indicate the injustice of Albany's scheme, and the necessity of self-defence, in the event of its being attempted to be carried into execution, were carefully noted by Ramorgny's creature, who was in hearing. They were plainly capable, however, of another construction by a person who did not hear the rest of the conversation, and understand their application. They might mean that Rothsay intended to get his uncle out of the way—a construction which did not ill accord with the feelings which existed in the prince's mind against the disturber of his peace, if these had been formed in another bosom, but unjustified by the prince's noble disposition, which would have despised any underhand scheme to rid himself of his bitterest enemy. The words were, however, uttered, and noted, and remembered; and they were not uttered in vain.

Ramorgny having thus procured evidence of the prince's designs against the life of his uncle, repaired to Albany, and narrated to him the statements made by the duke, and referred him, for corroboration, to his servant. Albany wished nothing more ardently than this communication; and, even without it, he would have been glad to have joined Ra-

morgny in any scheme for the removal of his rival. Other enemies were brought into action. Sir William Lindsay of Rossie, whose sister the duke had loved and deserted, and Archibald Douglas, the brother of Elizabeth, piqued by some private feeling, were willing to aid in the death of one who had courted the relative of one of them to desert her, and married that of the other to treat her with neglect. That the prince was unkind or unfaithful to his wife, who bore a reputation of being so fair and amiable, has been treated by some historians as a mere fable, resorted to by the unnatural earl, her brother, as a palliative of conduct which it was not suited to render in the slightest degree less revolting. There is reason, however, to suppose that Lindsay had some cause for his resentment in the desertion of his sister, who loved the duke, and never recovered from the effects of his unfaithful conduct.

The first project of these conspirators was worthy of the talents of the individuals who had determined to prostitute the best of the gifts of God to destroy one of his creatures. It was resolved to work upon the king in such a way as to procure from him some token of his disapprobation of the conduct of his son. It is difficult now to ascertain how this was effected, as there is no doubt that Rothsay still held a strong claim on the affections of his father. The result, however, shows that the means must have been of an extraordinary nature; for King Robert was got to sign a writ for the confinement of the prince. It is very probable that nothing more was intended by this than to show the king's displeasure, which would gradually relax as the slight punishment wrought the expected amendment. It has been doubted whether such writ was ever truly signed by the king; and surely it is not difficult to suppose that the men who, holding the gates of the palace in their hands, could admit or deny whom they chose to the royal presence, would not stop at forgery which they could conceal, if they

had made up their minds to murder, which has seldom or ever been successfully concealed. But it matters not, in so far as regards the fate of the prince, whether the writ was genuine or not. It was acted upon, and the unfortunate son of a king was seized by his enemies, Douglas and Ramorgny, lashed in his royal robes to the back of a sorry horse, and hurried through Fife, to a prison adjoining to the palace of Falkland.

The unhappy prince now saw that his death was determined; but he little suspected what was to be its cruel nature. The work of his enemies was done, but they had delegated what even their hard hearts could not accomplish to ruffians, from whose bosoms every humane feeling had been long eradicated. He was put under the charge of two men, brought, it is supposed, from Aberdeen—a locality as far from the scene of the tragedy they were to perform as possible—called John Wright and John Selkirk, names that remained infamous in Scotland for many a day. The faces of these men, filled with the expression of a determination to resist every feeling of humanity, contrasted strangely with the countenance of the royal youth, formed by nature, and moulded by his sympathies, to speak eloquently the language of affection, and reflect the fair lineaments of the most beautiful of the graces. It required only one glance of the prince's inquiring eye, to see that, if his fate depended upon the feelings of these men, he had no chance of salvation in this world.

The ruffians, having thrown the unfortunate youth into one of the low dungeons of the prison, without speaking a word, were preparing to leave him, when, urged by feelings of despair, he fell on his knees, and besought them to tell him what commission they had got from his enemies for the fulfilment of his fate.

"Tell me, good friends," he cried, "in what shape death is to come to the son of a king, that he may prepare his mind

to meet his end as becometh a man. Grant me, at least, the privilege of dying by my own hand, that the descendant of Bruce may escape the fate of malefactors, or the mangled termination of the devoted victim of revenge. You are not, you cannot be, so bad as the sternness of office makes you appear. Shall the Prince of Scotland sue in vain to the subjects of his father for the boon of a dagger? Merciful Heaven! am I refused this request? Then is cruelty to be added to injustice; and perhaps starvation—dreadful thought—awaits me, with its attendant agonies."

As the unfortunate prince uttered these words, he fell on the damp floor of the dungeon. His appeal produced nothing but a hollow growl, more like the sound of a mastiff's anger than the voice of a human being. Turning abruptly from him, they left him extended on the ground, and in an instant seemed to be entirely occupied about the manner in which they should secure, with double certainty, the door of the dungeon. On lifting his head, the victim heard nothing but the harsh expostulations of the two men, as they differed about the expediency of riveting the iron bars by which the door was fastened.

The wretched youth had truly anticipated his fate. Starvation was the mode of death fixed upon by his cowardly murderers. What might have been accomplished in an instant, was prolonged for many days. Cruelty was, indeed, as he had said, added to injustice; and the merciful death of the malefactor on the gallows was denied to the heart-rending entreaties of a prince. For fifteen days, according to a historian, he was suffered to remain without food, under the charge of Wright and Selkirk, whose task it was to watch the agony of their victim till it ended in death. It is said that, for awhile, the wretched prisoner was preserved in a remarkable manner, by the kindness of a poor woman, who, in passing through the garden of Falkland, was attracted by his groans to the grated window of his dungeon,

which was level with the ground, and became acquainted with his story. It was her custom to steal thither at night, and bring him food, by dropping small cakes through the grating, whilst milk, conducted through a pipe to his mouth, was the only way he could be supplied with drink. But Wright and Selkirk, suspecting from his appearance that he had some secret supply, watched, and detected the charitable visitant, and the prince was abandoned to his fate.

Such was the death assigned to the son of a king, the most favoured by nature, the most engaging, the most generous—what pity is it to add, the most volatile and irregular—that ever was born to a kingdom, amidst the acclamations of a loving people!

RETRIBUTION.

In these days, when a factitious style is made the vehicle of factitious feelings, we offer to our readers a simple story; and when we say that it is a true one, we may hope to claim an interest very different from that which is inspired by ingenious fiction.

There may be some who yet remember Fanny Rutherford, of the Parish of Carwhinn. She was one of the most gentle and amiable creatures that ever breathed—warm in her attachments, confiding in her love, and mild and kind in her dispositions. The daughter of a country gentleman, of small estate, but of great respectability, she was, at the period of our story, in her nineteenth year. Her father, though by no means wealthy, had spared no expense in her education; and her quick natural parts enabled her to derive all the benefit which that education was intended to confer. She was also the joy of two brothers, both intelligent, clever young men, bred to agricultural pursuits, in which they were largely and extensively engaged.

Mr Rutherford was a widower; and his household duties therefore devolved upon Fanny, who discharged them with exemplary propriety.

Hitherto, though of an ardent, susceptible, and even romantic disposition, Fanny's peace had never been disturbed by love. The quiet tenor of her days had passed away in the enjoyment of domestic happiness, and in the interchange of endearments with her father and brothers, to whom she was devotedly attached, and by whom she was most sincerely and tenderly loved in return. Neither a thought nor a wish beyond the sphere of this little round of felicity

ever entered the pure and unsophisticated mind of the happy and innocent girl. But this was a happiness that was not to last. Love, that bane or blessing of woman's existence, as its object is unworthy or otherwise, at length found its way into the guileless bosom of Fanny Rutherford; and, oh, what a consummation awaited that unfortunate attachment!

At the distance of about a mile from Mr Rutherford's, there lived a young man of the name of Raeburn, the son of a gentleman in similar circumstances with the former—that is, a small landed proprietor. This young man, who had received a very liberal education, was possessed of an agreeable person and of exceedingly pleasing manners; but there were occasional developments of character that but very indifferently harmonised with these qualities; and there were, besides, more than one little incident in his life that betrayed a degree of selfishness, not to say heartlessness, that would by no means have been expected in one of so frank and cheerful a disposition. Still these symptoms were, after all, of so trifling a character, that they could scarcely be said to have affected the reputation which Raeburn aimed at, and succeeded with a great many in acquiring—namely, that of a dashing, careless, good-hearted, and liberal-minded young fellow.

At this period, Henry Raeburn was residing at home, waiting for an appointment in the civil service of the East India Company, which had been promised him by a friend of his father's; and much of the spare time which his present circumstances placed at his disposal he spent at Mr Rutherford's, where his agreeable manners and general intelligence made him at all times a welcome visiter. But to none of the members of the family were these visits more agreeable than to Fanny, over whose affections his insinuating address and handsome exterior had made a complete conquest. Nor was Raeburn himself apparently less the

victim of this passion than she was. He took every opportunity of pouring into her ear the most ardent expressions of attachment. A thousand times he swore that he was hers for ever—that the sun would change his course, the stars forget to shine, ere he became inconstant to his Fanny. To all these professions of love the unsuspecting and confiding girl lent a willing ear, and listened and listened to the fascinating tale again and again, till her whole soul became absorbed by one single idea—until she found, in short, that she lived for Henry Raeburn alone.

Whether Raeburn was sincere in his professions of attachment to Fanny Rutherford, at this stage of their acquaintance, we cannot say, and have no means of ascertaining. That was a circumstance known to his Creator and himself alone.

The young people, however, made no attempts to conceal their mutual attachment—at least Fanny made none to conceal hers. Indeed, the guileless simplicity, and open and candid nature, of the amiable girl rendered her incapable of concealing it. Neither, though she could, would she have done it: her sense of propriety and delicacy of feeling would not have permitted her.

Fanny's father and brothers, therefore, were perfectly aware of the attachment alluded to; and although, of course, the marriage of the parties was a thing not to be thought of in their present circumstances, yet, as Henry was likely soon to obtain a lucrative situation in India, it was a very probable and very desirable contingency; and with this prospective consideration, Fanny's father did not disapprove of her choice, as young Raeburn was otherwise, by birth and education, a perfectly eligible match for his daughter. All that was wanting was fortune; and this was a desideratum which there was a reasonable probability of Henry soon supplying.

When we said, however, that the visits of Fanny's lover

were acceptable to all the members of Mr Rutherford's family, we said fully more than the facts warranted. There was one, at any rate, of that family to whom these visits were not only not acceptable, but positively disagreeable. This person was Fanny's eldest brother, Edward. Possessed of more penetration than his father or younger brother, he had perceived something in the character of Raeburn which he did not like, and which struck him as being strangely at variance with his general pretensions and professions. He had, in short, discovered several instances of selfishness and want of principle in the young man, which, though they were but of a trifling nature, had early imbued him with a secret prejudice against him; and this he did not hesitate to avow to his own family, and particularly to Fanny; but, in the latter case, his avowal was always accompanied by the most tender expressions of affection for herself, as if to convince her that it was on her account alone that he feared.

One day, on her returning from Mr Raeburn's, where she had been to an entertainment, and when Henry, who had accompanied her home, had just left the house—

"My dear Fanny," said her brother, addressing her in the blunt way peculiar to him, and taking her affectionately by the hand, "I don't like that fellow Raeburn. I would not willingly or needlessly say anything harsh of anyone whom you esteem; but you are guileless, Fanny, and ignorant of the ways of the world, still more so of the faithlessness of man, and therefore liable to have your judgment misled by your heart. Be cautious—be guarded, then, Fanny. Do, for your own sake, my dear sister, be cautious how you admit this man to tamper with your affections."

"Edward!" replied Fanny, bursting into tears, "what is the meaning of this solemn objurgation? I have never done, and never will do, anything without my father's consent and yours, Edward. But surely, surely you judge

unfairly of Henry, Edward. He is far too honourable and upright to deceive any one, much less ——"

"You, you would say," interrupted her brother.

Fanny blushed slightly, and went on: "If you had heard him, as I have often done, express his sentiments on the duties we owe to each other, and speak of the rules which ought to regulate our conduct, you would entertain a very different opinion of him—I am sure you would, Edward."

"Simple girl, simple girl!" said her brother. "He speak of the duties we owe to each other! He speak of the rules which ought to regulate our conduct!" he added, with a bitter sneer. "Well, perhaps it is all right, Fanny," he went on; "I may have judged harshly of Raeburn, and may be doing him an injustice; but, if I am, I never was more mistaken in a man in my life. But, Fanny," he added, with a sudden energy of manner, "here I swear—and I wish Raeburn heard the oath—that, if he deceive or injure you, I will pursue him to the ends of the earth—ay, through the snows of Greenland, or the burning deserts of the tropics—and seek a reparation that will cost the lives of one or both of us."

"Mercy, mercy!" exclaimed the weeping girl, terrified at the fierce looks and manner of her brother, yet at the same time throwing herself into his arms. "What dreadful language is this, Edward? What grounds on earth have you for anticipating so dreadful a catastrophe? I am sure you have seen nothing to warrant your expressing yourself in this frightful manner."

"I have not said that I anticipated anything, Fanny, regarding this attachment of yours," replied her brother. "I spoke only hypothetically. But, from this hour, I say no more on the subject. I trust, however, that what I have said will not be without its effect upon you, Fanny. You will perceive, my dear sister," he added, embracing her ten-

derly, "that it is my affection, and, I will add, my fears, for you, that have prompted all I have said."

"I know it, Edward—I know it," replied Fanny; "and I am grateful to you. But you will soon learn to like Henry better than you now do."

"Woman, woman—still woman to the last," said her brother, smiling. "But do, Fanny, permit what I have said to make some impression on you." And Edward left the apartment.

Woman, woman still, as her brother had said, the warm-hearted girl's affections for Raeburn suffered no diminution whatever from what had just passed between her and her brother. In truth, as such interferences almost always do, it had the effect rather of increasing her love, by placing the object of her affections—in her sight, at any rate—in the light of one who is injured by being harshly judged of.

"My Henry deceive me!" she thought within herself on this occasion—"impossible! impossible! That kind and gentle look!—can that deceive? That benignant smile!—can there be treachery there? That frank and open manner!—is that assumed? No, no, Edward—you wrong Henry; you do indeed, Edward. You wrong him grievously."

Such were the reflections in which Fanny Rutherford indulged when her brother had left her, and such was the effect which his fears and suspicions had upon her unsuspecting and confiding heart.

We have already informed the reader that Raeburn was at this time waiting for an appointment in the civil service of the East India Company. This appointment he at length obtained, and he was, at the same time, ordered to proceed immediately to London, to embark for his new destination; and with this order he complied, after taking an affectionate leave of Fanny, to whom he once more, and for the last time, vowed eternal constancy and love. It is al-

most unnecessary to add, that a mutual promise to maintain a frequent and regular correspondence during the period of their separation was also given by the lovers. But, besides all this, a distinct arrangement, to which Fanny's father and brothers were privy, was likewise made, that, so soon as Henry should be fairly settled in India, and should have ascertained that his income was sufficient to warrant such a step, Fanny, being previously informed of this, was to join him, when their destinies should be united.

These matters arranged, Henry proceeded to London, where he soon after embarked for Calcutta, which he eventually reached in safety, at the end of the usual period occupied in that voyage.

Faithful to his promise, Henry, soon after his arrival, wrote to Fanny, and gave a very flattering account of his situation and prospects, expressing, at the same time, a hope that he would soon be in a condition to invite her to come out and partake his good fortune.

This letter was followed in due time by another, in which the same sentiments of love and affection were expressed; but it contained a less flattering account of his circumstances. These, the writer said, had scarcely answered the expectations he had formed from them on his first arrival; and he feared, if they did not improve, that, however painful their separation was to him, he would be compelled to submit to its continuance for some time, as he could not think of bringing her there, so far from her home and her friends, until he should be able to receive her in a manner that would more unequivocally bespeak the sincerity of his love than his present means would admit of.

These two letters, as we have said, came in due time; and, notwithstanding the discouraging tenor of the last, were received by poor Fanny with the most unfeigned delight. But, when the time came round that another letter should have reached her from her lover, it was in vain that

the affectionate girl looked for that solace to her wearied spirit. Week after week passed away, month succeeded month, and, finally, year followed year, and still no letter came, to raise the prostrate and withering hopes of poor Fanny Rutherford. For some time she was impressed with a conviction that her lover was dead; for she could not, and would not, believe that her Henry was faithless. But in this belief—perhaps the least afflicting of the two—she was not permitted long to remain; for it was ascertained, through Henry's father, not only that he was still living, but that he was getting on prosperously, and in a fair way of soon realising a fortune.

Unwilling, unwilling, indeed, was poor Fanny to believe this account of Henry—but it was certain; and this certainty of the neglectfulness, or, yet worse, faithlessness, of her lover threatened to hurry her to a premature grave.

Nearly three years had now passed away since the receipt of her last letter from Henry; and she had long given up all hopes of ever hearing from him again, or of ever being more to him than she then was. While sitting alone, however, one morning about this period, her head leaning upon her hand, and listlessly gazing through a window that overlooked the approach to her father's house, her curiosity was slightly excited by observing the person who usually brought the letters from the neighbouring village hurrying with unwonted speed towards the house, and, as she approached nearer, waving a letter which she held in her hand towards Fanny. In an instant the blood, which had long forsaken the poor girl's cheeks, rushed back to its forgotten repositories. Her heart beat fast and thick, and a violent tremor seized on her whole emaciated frame. The letter was, and she now knew it, from Henry Raeburn.

Having got possession of the intensely-interesting document, she rushed with it up-stairs to her own apartment, bolted the door, and flung herself down on a bed; laying, at

the same time, the letter, which, from excessive agitation, she was unable at the moment to open, on a small table beside her. Having, however, in a few minutes regained as much composure as she conceived would enable her to venture on the exciting task of perusing the letter, she arose, seized it convulsively, and staggered with it unfolded in her grasp towards the window, where she began to read. The letter commenced thus—

"My dearest, dearest Fanny,—What is the meaning of this? Cruel, cruel girl, it is now precisely two years and a-half since I received your last letter, although I have written to you at least six or seven times during that period. What a relief, Fanny, it would be to my mind, to know that these letters of mine had miscarried—that they had never reached you!—for, in that case, I might still hope, still believe, that my Fanny was faithful. Indeed, it is in this hope that I live; for, as I have been for the last two years going from place to place, at a great distance in the interior, I think it not improbable that my letters—all of which were despatched from these remote residences—have never found their way to you."

The writer then went on, praying Fanny not to lose a moment in relieving his mind on this, to him, he said, most painful subject. After a good deal more to similar purpose, he continued—

"Will my Fanny not take it amiss—she will not, I know, if she still be to me as she once was, and what I still am to her—if I request her to send me her portrait?—that, since fortune still denies me the happiness of contemplating the original, I may, as I assuredly will, find some consolation in possessing the copy. I will then," continued the writer, "have you present to my corporeal eye, as you are, and have constantly been, to my mental vision. Enclosed, my dearest Fanny, you have a draft for twenty guineas, which please apply to the purpose just expressed, and let there not be a moment lost in forwarding me your beloved picture."

The writer then went on to say, that he expected to be in a condition to invite her out in the course of a twelvemonth

or so; and ultimately finished by a repetition of the most tender expressions of affection and love.

When Fanny had completed the perusal of this, to her, most gratifying letter—that is, after she had read it at least six times over—she rushed wildly down-stairs in quest of her brother Edward; and having found him, "See, see, Edward!" exclaimed the delighted girl, forcing the letter into his hands; "read that, Edward, and acknowledge, my brother, the injustice which you and all of us have done to Henry. I knew, I knew," she went on, "my Henry would not deceive me. I felt assured that his silence and seeming neglect would one day be satisfactorily accounted for, and without impugning his honour."

To these expressions of joy, and delight, and confidence, Fanny's brother made no reply, but sat down coolly to read the letter that had been put into his hands; and greatly disappointed was the poor girl, who was watching his countenance with the most intense interest, while he read, to find that the contents seemed to excite in him no emotion whatever. When he finished—"Well, Fanny," he said, dryly, at the same time carelessly returning her the letter, "it's all very well. I am glad to find that Raeburn is not altogether the man I feared he was. He seems to think of you with unabated regard still, Fanny."

"Oh yes, Edward!—oh yes! I knew Henry would not deceive me!" again repeated the unsuspecting and delighted girl.

Edward, as we have already said, tenderly loved Fanny; and it was this regard for her that prevented him saying all he thought of the letter he had just read. He would not, for any consideration, have damped the feelings of joy and happiness which it had inspired in the bosom of his sister, by making any remarks that might have a tendency of that kind; but he could not help observing sufficient grounds for such observations. He saw, in the first

place, that Raeburn's assertion that he had written several letters to Fanny was a downright falsehood, or, at best, of a very suspicious character; for his father—who lived, as the reader will recollect we have already said, in the immediate neighbourhood, and whom he frequently met with—had never made any complaint of any interruption in his son's correspondence; and he (Edward), moreover, knew that Henry's father had received many letters from him during the very period of the suspension of his correspondence with Fanny. It therefore appeared extremely odd to him that all the letters addressed to the one should have miscarried, while all those addressed to the other had reached their destination in safety, and in due course of time. In the next place, Edward saw, or thought he saw, that the general tenor of the letter was forced and unnatural; and, lastly, that procrastination was apparently still the object of the writer, notwithstanding his having vaguely named a period when he should invite Fanny to share his fortunes as his wife.

All this Edward perceived in the letter in question; but the worst he thought of it was, that Raeburn had for a time forgotten his sister, probably in a temporary regard for another, and that his affection for her having returned, he was now anxious to atone for his negligence or infidelity; and, under this impression, he was willing to overlook the subterfuge to which Raeburn had had recourse, to account for his silence; and, in these views of the matter, Edward's father and brother concurred.

Two or three days after the receipt of Henry's letter, Fanny, though in a very indifferent state of health, proceeded to Edinburgh, and had her likeness taken there in miniature. On her return, the picture was carefully packed in a small box or case, and, accompanied by a letter from Fanny, despatched to its remote destination. In this letter, the poor girl, in allusion to the portrait, said—"I have, in

compliance with your wishes, Henry, sent you my portrait; but I fear it will sadly disappoint you; for a more unpropitious time for transferring my miserable countenance to canvas (I believe, however, in this case it is ivory) could scarcely have been chosen; for I have been extremely ill for a long time past, and am yet very far from being well. I have been broken-hearted, Henry, and have been labouring under the worst and most hopeless of all diseases—a crushed and broken spirit."

Thus did the poor girl allude to the misery which Raeburn's neglect had entailed on her. Her delicacy forbade her saying more, and her candid and confiding disposition would not permit her to say less.

Leaving matters in this state at Rose Vale (the name of Mr Rutherford's residence), we will, with the reader's consent, embark in the same ship with Fanny's portrait, and proceed to the East Indies, to see with our own eyes what, at this period, was the general conduct, character, and circumstances of him for whom that picture was intended. Having done this—an easy matter with you and us, good reader, though no trifling affair to others—we shall find Raeburn residing in a very handsome house at Calcutta; and in one of the most conspicuous places in one of the principal rooms in that house, we shall find the portrait of Fanny Rutherford suspended—and well worthy of the distinction was this likeness of the lovely girl. Beautiful! exceedingly beautiful in her sadness!—for the painter had been faithful; and but too plainly did that picture tell of sorrow and of suffering—"of hope deferred, that maketh the heart sick." Nor did Henry Raeburn seem insensible to the beauty expressed in that little picture. To every one who visited him he showed it, with an air of exultation and triumph; pressed on their notice the soft expression of the fine dark eye, the light, delicate, and well-arched eyebrow, the ruby lip, and elegantly-formed nose and chin. But, be

it remarked—and it was an odd circumstance—it was to the young unmarried men alone who visited him that he showed the picture, and that he thus dwelt on the details of its beauties. Strange distinction this—to the unmarried alone that he showed the picture, and enlarged on the attractions of its subject! What does this mean? Much, much it means; and a darker or more atrocious meaning never disgraced the act of man. But we will leave the full explanation of this atrocity to be developed by the progress of our story.

"Ah! you dogs, you!" Raeburn would say, with well-affected jocularity, to his friends of the description already mentioned, when showing them Fanny's portrait, "isn't that a pretty girl, now? and am not I a lucky fellow to have secured the affections of so charming a woman? What would you give, you rogues, you, for such a creature as that for a wife?" Then, holding the portrait aloft, "Come, say now, gentlemen, what would you give for her, suppose I was willing to part with her; which, perhaps, I am, if I could get a fair price for my right. Bid for her, gentlemen, bid for her!" he would say, laughingly, and *affecting* to make a joke of the matter. "I will put her up to sale, and warrant the stock to be equal to the sample!" "A thousand rupees!" "Thank you, John. Very well for a beginning! Get on, gentlemen, get on." "Two thousand! three thousand!" "That's it. Go it, my spirited lads, go it; but she's worth six times the money yet." "Eight thousand! ten thousand!" "Ay, now you get on bravely, and are approaching the mark, though still at a great distance from it." "Fifteen thousand! twenty thousand!" "Very well—twenty thousand! Twenty thousand, gentlemen! Will no one bid more! Why, Tom, I thought you were a better judge of female beauty than to allow such a bargain as this to slip through your fingers!" "Twenty-five thousand!" "Well done, Tom; I knew you were a

lad of spirit, and had too much of the knight-errant in you to allow a fair lady like this to be knocked down below her value. Twenty-five thousand rupees—once, twice, thrice! There, down she goes—she's yours, Tom; pay me the money, and I'll order her out for you by the first ship."

This was a scene of frequent occurrence in Raeburn's house, when a number of young fellows had got together there, and something very like it was repeated to each of them individually when they chanced to call alone; particularly in the case of one of them—a Mr Cressingham, the son of a gentleman who held one of the highest civil situations in India, and who was enormously wealthy. This was Raeburn's friend, Tom, as he familiarly called him; and to him he was especially eloquent and importunate on the subject of Fanny's beauty.

"Well, hang me if she an't a devilish pretty creature that, after all!" said Tom Cressingham to Raeburn, as they one day sat alone smoking their hookahs in the apartment in which Fanny's portrait hung, and on which he was listlessly gazing.

"That she is, Tom," replied Raeburn; "wouldn't you fancy such a girl as that, now, for a wife, Tom?"

"Faith and I would, Harry; I'd give ten thousand rupees for such a wife."

"You're coming down in your price, Tom," replied Raeburn; "you offered twenty-five thousand for her the other night."

"Well, I don't know but I would give that sum for her, after all, Harry; for she's certainly a delightful-looking creature. But why don't you bring out the girl, and marry her at once yourself, Harry?"

"Umph!" ejaculated Raeburn, "that wouldn't be altogether so convenient just now. You know I'm confoundedly in debt, Tom" (this was but too true; for he was grossly dissipated, and was living in a style far beyond his income),

"and must clear my feet a bit before I think of marrying. Besides, to tell you a secret, Tom, I don't care much about standing to my Scotch bargain in that matter; and, to be plain with you, I wish you, or some one else, would relieve me of it, by taking the girl off my hands; giving me, of course, a handsome consideration for my right in the property."

This was said jokingly; but it was very easy to see that the speaker would not care to be thought serious; and this Cressingham perceived.

"Harry," he said, "are you in earnest?"

"To be sure I am," replied Raeburn; "never was more in earnest in my life."

"Then I'm your man, Harry, if we can agree about the terms," rejoined Cressingham. "What say you about the consideration."

"Why, I don't know; you see she is a very handsome girl, Tom; and, on the word of a *gentleman*, I assure you, she is as amiable as she is lovely."

"Well, at a word, Harry," said Cressingham, "I'll give you five thousand pounds sterling money, the day that woman becomes my wife; you being at the expense of bringing her out, and managing all that part of the business."

"Done!" said Raeburn.

"Done!" said Cressingham. And they struck hands upon the bargain.

Raeburn's villany, good reader, is now before you fully and fairly. The conversation just recorded was no joke, but, as he himself acknowledged, downright earnest; and it will readily be conceded, we think, that a piece of more heartless depravity is not upon record. Neither, we beg to assure the reader, is this villany imaginary, nor the character of Raeburn the invention of fancy. The villany was actually perpetrated, and the villain actually lived.

Fanny's portrait had been sent for for the express pur-

pose of turning it to the account to which we have seen it applied. He had sent for it that he might exhibit it as a sample of goods which he had to dispose of, and which he meant to sell to the highest bidder; and it was with this view—with the view of finding a purchaser—that he had hung the portrait of his victim in a conspicuous place, and had urged on the notice of his visiters the various beauties which it displayed.

To return to our tale. Raeburn and Cressingham—the latter, we need hardly say, being nearly as unprincipled as the former—having come to the understanding which we have just detailed, Raeburn insisted that their bargain should be expressed on paper; that is, that Cressingham should bind himself by a written document to fulfil his part of the transaction—in other words, should bind himself to pay the £5000 on the day Fanny became his wife; although with what face he could produce such a document in a court of justice to enforce his claim, in the event of Cressingham evading it, it certainly is not easy to conceive. But, desirous of being secure in the meantime, on such a document as that alluded to, he insisted; and it was instantly given him.

This part of the transaction settled, it was Raeburn's business to manage the rest:—the first step of which was to get Fanny out; the next, to get her palmed upon Cressingham; and he lost no time in setting about it.

As the subsequent proceedings of the villain, however, will be more strikingly exhibited by shifting the scene once more to Rose Vale, we request the reader to accompany us thither for a moment.

The year had a good while expired, which Raeburn had fixed on, in his last letter to Fanny, as the period when he should send for her to join him at Calcutta; and the poor girl was looking fondly and anxiously for the promised invitation; but, for several months, she was again doomed to suffer all the pains of suspense and disappointment. From

this, however, she was at length relieved by the appearance of the long-expected letter. This, like all its predecessors, was filled with the most tender expressions of regard and esteem. "It is now," said the writer, "with the most heart-felt—nay, this is far too tame a phrase—it is with a delight, my beloved Fanny, which I cannot find language to express—that I inform you, that the circumstances in which I now find myself warrant me in inviting you out to share my fortunes. I enclose a draft for £150, to defray the expense of your passage, and other contingencies connected with it; and I beg of you, my dearest, dearest Fanny, as you value my happiness, nay, my existence, to lose no time in coming out to me; for I will be miserable till you arrive." To this was added a great many particular directions, as to Fanny's best mode of proceeding in the business of her embarkation; and again the writer resumed the strain of adulation with which he had begun; and with this strain, also, he finally ended.

As in the former case, Fanny instantly put this letter into the hands of her brother Edward; and again she was disappointed to find that it was read without the smallest appearance of satisfaction. Neither was it much more gratifying to her father and younger brother. But their feelings regarding it proceeded chiefly from their reluctance to part with Fanny, and to her going alone on so long and dreary a voyage; but neither they, nor Edward, even with his more serious grounds of dissatisfaction, felt that they would be warranted in preventing Fanny from availing herself of the apparent good fortune which she was now invited to partake. They felt that it would be an act of injustice towards the amiable girl, to exercise any such authority over her fortunes and affections; and, therefore, though it was not without great reluctance, they finally consented to her departure. This conceded, and every necessary preparation for the voyage being in a few days completed, Edward ac-

companied Fanny to London, saw her on board of an East Indiaman that was about to sail for Calcutta, and having consigned her to the care of the captain, bade her an affectionate adieu. In less than an hour afterwards, the ship was under weigh; and Fanny Rutherford had commenced her ill-starred voyage to the East.

On the ship's arrival at Calcutta, which she reached in safety and in due course of time, amongst the first persons who came on board of her were Raeburn and Cressingham. Fanny was down below in the cabin, and in the act of packing a small trunk, preparatory to her going ashore, when Raeburn entered. The moment the poor girl saw him, she flew towards him, with an expression of the wildest delight. But, oh! fond and confiding heart, what a shock was it to thee—what a withering sensation was thine—when you found your warm and generous impulses received with a cold and distant civility!—for in such manner did Raeburn now receive the gentle, affectionate, and unsuspecting girl, who had crossed the "rude ocean," left kindred and home, to follow his fortunes—the fortunes of the man she loved—in a far distant land.

In this atrocious conduct of Raeburn's there was policy as well as natural heartlessness; for he was desirous of disgusting her with his coldness, and thus preparing the way for the addresses of Cressingham. Of this part of the villain's design, Fanny was, of course, utterly ignorant; but the quick discerning eye of love enabled her instantly to detect the brutal and ungracious manner of Raeburn, so different from what she had expected; and the discovery fell upon her spirit with the most deadly effect. She, however, made no complaint; but it was evident that the manner of her reception by her deceiver had sunk deep into her heart. Poor Fanny proceeded with the packing of her little trunk in silence—a silence interrupted only by an occasional sigh, long drawn, and heavy laden with grief. Tears, too, might

have been detected stealing down her cheeks, were it not that she kept her head, purposely, too closely over the trunk to permit their being seen. In the work, too, in which she was employed, be it observed, Raeburn did not offer her the smallest assistance, but continued walking up and down the cabin, whistling carelessly, and looking at the prints with which the walls were hung.

This was the scene, then, in the cabin, when Raeburn, after the lapse of a quarter-an-hour or so from the time of his first descending, suddenly, and without giving Fanny the least previous notice of his intention, went to the foot of the cabin-stair, and called loudly on Cressingham, who was on deck. Cressingham appeared at the cabin-door.

"Why don't you come down?" said Raeburn. And he followed up this query with a significant wink.

"Why, I waited till I should be called," replied Cressingham, with a knowing smile; at the same time commencing his descent into the cabin.

"Mr Cressingham, Fanny," said Raeburn, when the former came down—"a very particular friend of mine."

Fanny, before raising her head from the trunk, hurriedly wiped her eyes, and stood up to receive the stranger; but it was wholly out of the poor girl's power thus suddenly to regain her composure, or to obliterate from her countenance the traces of the miserable feelings with which her soul was agonised. These remained but too plain; and were at once detected by Cressingham, who, in place of being moved to compassion by them for the unhappy girl, looked on them as welcome indications of feelings that promised to favour his own advances; inasmuch as they bespoke a dissatisfaction on the part of Fanny, at once with her situation and with Raeburn.

It being now Cressingham's time to begin the performance of his part of the nefarious plot, he advanced towards Miss Rutherford with one of his most gracious looks, and wel-

comed her to Calcutta. Then, placing himself in a chair directly opposite to her, and leaning forward towards her, till he had nearly thrust his head into her face, he began a strain of the most impertinent adulation, not unmingled with expressions of a less harmless character. These last did not escape Fanny, who deeply felt the insult they involved, although she was already too much humbled in spirit to resent them.

When Cressingham had taken up the position described, and had begun the nauseous badinage alluded to, Raeburn, on some trifling pretence, left the cabin and went on deck. The motive for this proceeding will at once present itself to the reader. Cressingham, finding himself thus left alone with Fanny, was proceeding to use other liberties than those of speech; and had already, with the most impudent familiarity, thrown one of his arms around Miss Rutherford's neck, when, with a violent effort, she extricated herself from him, and rushed, in a state of great agitation and alarm, up the cabin-stair, calling on Henry, who was at the moment standing at the stern of the vessel, and directly opposite the cabin-door.

Guessing, or rather knowing very well, the cause of Fanny's outcry and terror, he went towards her, and sternly and angrily asked her, "What she made all this noise for!"

"O Henry! Henry!" exclaimed the agitated girl, "take me out of this, take me out of this. Let us go on shore, Henry, directly. Do, do, let us go on shore; for I will not go down into that cabin again."

"Pooh, you silly fool, you!" replied Raeburn, harshly. "What are you afraid of? Don't you like Cressingham? He's an excellent fellow, only a little rough or so, now and then; but not a pin the worse for that. Why, he's one of the handsomest and richest fellows in Calcutta, and half the girls in the town are cocking their caps at him."

"I have nothing to say to or of Mr Cressingham, Henry,"

replied Fanny. "All that I ask of you is, to take me immediately ashore."

With this request Raeburn, seeing that it would not be advisable to push matters further at that moment, sulkily complied. A boat was ordered alongside. Fanny's luggage was placed in it, and she, Raeburn, and Cressingham, were forthwith rowed on shore, where, the moment they landed, the latter, after whispering something into Raeburn's ear, and offering some ineffectual attempts at making his peace with Miss Rutherford, left them.

Where, now, does the reader imagine, did Raeburn conduct the unhappy victim of his villany. To his own splendid mansion? No. To a decent hotel, then?—or, probably, he consigned her to the care of some repectable female friend or acquaintance? Neither of these did the heartless ruffian do. He took her to a mean lodging, in one of the meanest parts of the town, pleading some lame apology for not taking her to his own house; and there left her in the hands of strangers, without a word of consolation or comfort, or of kindness. He said, however, before going away, that he would again call in the evening, and would, in the meantime, send a female domestic from his own house, to attend her, together with some necessaries.

It would be a vain, an idle task, to attempt to describe what were the unfortunate girl's feelings, now that the hideous truth, that she had been deceived and betrayed, though with what view she could not conjecture, stood undisguised before her. They were dreadful, too excruciating, too exquisitely agonising, to be expressed in words or in wailing. Their effect was to benumb every faculty, and to prostrate every sense; and, as one thus afflicted, sat poor Fanny Rutherford in a chair, at the window of her shabby apartment.

That evening, the first of her arrival, Raeburn, contrary to his promise, did not again visit her; but Cressingham

came in his place, and dreadful was the result of this unwelcome visit on the poor girl's frame. It instantly brought on a crisis in that disease of the mind under which she was already labouring.

The moment he entered the apartment, she uttered a piercing shriek, and rushed frantically to the furthest corner of the room, in the greatest terror, calling on the intruder in the name of Heaven not to come near her—not to approach her. "Leave me, leave me!" she exclaimed, in a tone of bitter agony. "If there be the smallest portion of humanity in your nature, you will leave me instantly. For the love of Heaven," she again repeated, "and of all that you hold dear, leave me! I am deceived and betrayed by him in whom I put all my earthly trust. Oh! my father, my brothers, if ye knew of this. But you will never know it; for I will never see you again. Never, never, never!"

The extreme agitation, the terror and outcries of the unfortunate girl, at once arrested Cressingham's progress, and brought several persons that were in the house around her; and by these last—Cressingham having sneaked off, without saying a word—it was judged advisable to send immediately for medical assistance, which was accordingly done. Nor was it unnecessary; for a strong fever had already seized on the poor young lady, and was rapidly exhausting her strength.

The medical gentleman sent for instantly attended, and ordered Miss Rutherford to be put to bed. He then prescribed for her as for one whose danger he considered imminent; and he was not mistaken. Deeply interested in the unfortunate girl, from whom he had learned a good deal of her melancholy story, the medical gentleman who had been calle. in did all that man could do to arrest the progress of th. fatal disease under which she was labouring. Night an day he attended her, during her severe but brief illness, and not only employed his own skill to save her, but that of

some of the most eminent of his professional brethren in the town, whom he brought to his assistance.

But all human efforts were vain. From hour to hour, the fevr went on, increasing alarmingly, accompanied by a proportionable diminution of the poor patient's strength, until, at length, the awful and fatal crisis arrived. On the evening of the third day after her arrival in Calcutta, Fanny Rutherford breathed her last, surrounded with strangers, and in a foreign land.

But where was the master ruffian all this time? How was he employed, and how did he feel, while this dreadful and affecting scene was enacting? Why, he was giving himself very little concern about it, further than that which proceeded from his fears for his £5000.

He had indeed called two or three times at Fanny's lodgings during her illness, to inquire for her, and had even sent her some cordials—cordials, alas! of which she had never partaken—from his own house; but more than this he had not done, nor in any other way had he evinced the smallest sympathy for the unhappy victim of his villany.

Raeburn knew that Fanny's illness was of a dangerous nature—but he had no idea that it was to terminate as it did so soon; and it was under this mistaken impression that he and Cressingham called at Fanny's lodgings on the very evening on which she died, and, as it happened, within a few minutes after that melancholy event had taken place.

Having tapped gently at the door, which was slowly opened to him by the lodging-house-keeper herself—

"How is your patient to-night, lady?" he said, addressing the latter, smilingly.

"She is well, sir—she is well," replied the woman, in whom Fanny's gentle nature and hard fate—of which she, too, had gathered something during the unfortunate girl's fits of delirium—had excited a strong feeling of sympathy,

"She is well!—she is well!" she said, wiping her eyes with her apron as she spoke. "She's in heaven, sir!"

"What!" exclaimed Raeburn, in a tone of voice startling from its hollowness, and becoming deadly pale; his mean and dastardly soul instantly sinking under the weight of guilt with which he felt this dreadful intelligence burdening it. "What! she's not dead?"

"But she is though," replied the woman; "and there's an avenging God above that will seek out and make a terror and example of those who have been the cause of this poor girl's death."

"What do you mean, woman?" said Raeburn, in an alarm which he could not conceal, and which the slightest allusion to his villany was now sufficient to excite to an overwhelming degree; "you do not mean to say that she died by violence?"

"I know what I know, Mr Raeburn," rejoined the lodging-house-keeper, "and that's all I have to say about the matter." And she turned into the house.

Having by no means any wish to renew the conversation, Raeburn availed himself of the opportunity presented by the woman's retiring into the house, to sneak off, which he did, and joined his friend Cressingham, who was waiting for him at a little distance.

"She's dead, Cressingham!—she's dead!" he said, in great agitation, as he approached the latter.

"Dead!" exclaimed Cressingham—"is it possible? Why, then, Harry, your £5000 are gone, and you have been a villain for nothing."

"A villain, did you say, Cressingham?" repeated Raeburn, his lips pale and quivering as he spoke.

"Yes; surely a villain—a double-dyed villain!" reiterated the former. "Did you ever imagine you were anything else? My share in the transaction is bad enough—I allow it; but it's nothing to yours, Raeburn—nothing; for I would

assuredly have married the girl, if she would have had me. My conduct in the business was perhaps that of a profligate; but yours—yours, Raeburn—was unquestionably that," repeated Cressingham, coolly and considerately—"that of a double-dyed villain." Saying this, he turned on his heel and left him.

The instances just mentioned were the first and the only ones in which Raeburn had yet suffered the martyrdom of hearing the opinion of others of his conduct with regard to Miss Rutherford; but this was a species of torture to which he was now to be frequently exposed. On this very occasion, he had not proceeded twenty yards from the place where Cressingham had left him, when he encountered the medical gentleman who had been attending his victim. This person, conjecturing, from the direction whence Raeburn was coming, that he had been inquiring for his patient, accosted him, and asked him how she was.

Raeburn, it will readily be believed, would have gone fifty miles about—ay, even on his bare knees—rather than have exposed himself to this meeting; but it had taken place, and he now, therefore, endeavoured to suppress his agitation, and tried to look as composed as possible; and it was with this forced and affected calmness that he replied to the physician's inquiry, that his patient was dead.

"Dead!" said the kind-hearted man; "ah, poor girl! I knew it was at hand, but I thought she might have lived for at least twenty-four hours yet. Well, then," he went on, and now looking Raeburn sternly in the face, "since it is so, I will tell you, Mr Raeburn, my opinion of what your conduct has been in this most heartrending affair; for you are deeply implicated in it. My opinion, then, is, sir, that it has been most infamous, most atrocious; and, regarding yourself, sir, I certainly think you one of the most heartless ruffians that ever lived."

"Ruffian, sir!" repeated Raeburn, affecting to feel in-

sulted, although he was quaking in every limb—"ruffian, sir! I shall have satisfaction for this, sir, you may depend upon it."

"Satisfaction, you scoundrel!" exclaimed Dr Henderson—the name of Fanny's medical attendant—"what right have you to satisfaction? Who would condescend to fight such a dastardly and disgraceful villain as you are? But, mark me, sir," he went on; "I know who the lady's friends are; and you may depend upon it, I shall not lose a moment in writing to inform them of everything connected with this shocking affair, and of your conduct towards the deceased. Take my word for that, sir. And, sir, not only will I do this, but I will inform every one I know of your conduct, until you are scouted from all society."

To this Raeburn made no other reply than by turning on his heel, and muttering the words, "Dr Henderson, you shall hear from me."

"Hear from you, you basest and most infamous of men!" said the doctor, looking with an expression of the most profound contempt and hatred after Raeburn, as he receded; "the less we hear of you or from you, the better for yourself, you ruffian."

Faithfully redeeming his pledge, Dr Henderson, on the following day, wrote to Fanny's father, whose address he had learned from her while attending her, and detailed all he knew—and this was nearly all that was to be known—regarding Raeburn's conduct to his daughter; for, although the latter had never accused Raeburn to him of ill-treatment, the doctor had, by connecting the broken hints which she had dropped from time to time, and especially by marking certain expressions which escaped her during her temporary fits of delirium, arrived at a knowledge of the whole truth. Having executed this part of his threat, Dr Henderson set diligently about the remaining portion, which was to give all the publicity he could to the story of Rae-

burn's infamy; and so successful was he in his efforts in this way, that he had the satisfaction in a very short time of seeing him shunned by all his acquaintances, and completely debarred from respectable society.

After Fanny's death, Raeburn had evinced a disposition to take an active part in her obsequies; and even expressed a willingness to defray the whole of the funeral charges. But this Dr Henderson would on no account permit. Neither would he suffer him to interfere in any way whatever with the funeral rites; the whole expense of which he insisted on paying out of his own pocket; and Raeburn knew too well the advantage the doctor possessed over him, to offer any resistance to these peremptory objections.

Thus stood matters, then, with Raeburn, and thus they remained for about eighteen months afterwards. He still, during all this time, continued in possession of his situation; but his superiors, who were well acquainted with the story of his villany to Miss Rutherford, were eagerly and anxiously watching for an opportunity to dismiss him. They did not feel that they would have been warranted in discharging him for his infamous conduct on the occasion alluded to, as it was a matter of which they had no right, officially, to take cognisance; but they had determined that the slightest dereliction of duty on his part should cost him his situation. Of this Raeburn was perfectly aware; and it required all his diligence, care, and attention, to avoid the visitation with which he was threatened. Such, we say, then, was the state of matters with Raeburn for about eighteen months after Fanny Rutherford's death. At the expiry of this period, however, that event occurred which winds up this tragic tale.

One evening, about nine o'clock, Raeburn was sitting solitary in his room, musing on the miseries to which his villany had subjected him, and no doubt indulging, as all villains do, in imaginary schemes of vengeance against his

enemies, when a waiter from one of the hotels in town called, and said that a gentleman there desired to see him immediately on a matter of importance.

Raeburn, conceiving that it might be on some official business that he was wanted, instantly repaired to the hotel, and was ushered into the room where the person was who wished to see him.

That person kept his back towards Raeburn till he had fairly entered the apartment, and until the waiter who had shown him in had retired. This done, he suddenly rushed towards the door, snatching up at the same time one of a pair of pistols which lay on a table in the middle of the room, and having locked the door in the inside, he fiercely confronted Raeburn, who, horrorstruck at the sight, instantly recognised, in the person before him, Edward Rutherford, the brother of the unfortunate Fanny.

"Do you know me, villain? Do you know me?" shouted out Edward, first seizing him by the breast, and then dashing him from him with a violence that sent him reeling to the farther end of the apartment. "Do you know the brother of Fanny Rutherford, murderer? Did you think, ruffian, that you were safe from my vengeance, because the half of the globe lay between us? If you did, you mistook Edward Rutherford. But I will waste no more words on you, villain! The shade of my murdered sister—murdered by the cruellest of all deaths—is calling aloud for retribution, and, in her name, I am here to demand it! Here, dastard!" he said, taking up the other pistol, and presenting it to Raeburn—"here, take this, and stand to me like a man; for I would not imbrue my hands in your filthy blood but upon equal terms. Although you but little deserve it, I will give you a chance for your life! Come, sir," he went on, Raeburn declining to take the pistol, "take it—take it; for, by the heaven above us, one or other of us, or both, must die; and your only chance

is in opposing me; for, if you do not fire, I will! By all that's sacred, I will!" At this moment, Raeburn rushed to the window, with the view of calling for assistance; and one supplicatory cry, which, however, was unattended to, he did emit. But, ere he could fully effect his object, Edward had him by the throat, and, holding his pistol within a few inches of his head, threatened, if he stirred or repeated his outcry, that that moment should be his last.

Seeing the desperate situation in which he was placed, the trembling wretch now took the pistol from Rutherford's hand, being aware, as he had been told, that it was indeed his only chance for life.

The parties now took their stations, one at each end of the room, and confronted each other.

"Raise your weapon, Raeburn; raise your weapon!" exclaimed Rutherford, on observing that his antagonist was not proceeding to assume a hostile attitude. "Your not firing will not save you from mine. I give you fair warning!"

Raeburn elevated, and levelled his pistol.

"Are you ready?" said his terrible opponent.

"Yes," replied Raeburn, faintly.

"Then fire, villain!" exclaimed Rutherford; and both pistols went off at the same instant, but with very different effect. A retributive power had directed the fatal engines of destruction. Raeburn's bullet struck the wall wide of its mark, while Rutherford's passed through the heart of him at whom it was aimed, and he fell lifeless on the floor.

Rutherford threw himself on his knees, and holding aloft the still reeking weapon of death, thanked Heaven that he had been permitted to be the avenger of his sister's wrongs.

The house in which this dreadful scene took place was a large one, and the apartment, especially selected on that account by Rutherford, was a remote one; so that the firing

was not heard by any of the inmates—at least not so distinctly as to inform them that it was the noise of firearms. No one, therefore, appeared to interrupt the escape which Rutherford now meditated, and lost no time in effecting. He left the apartment, and, unheeded by any one, descended the great staircase which led to it and to others, and fled from the house.

Although, however, Rutherford effected his escape in safety, the transaction which rendered his flight necessary did not long remain unknown. It came to the ears of justice, and she uncoupled her bloodhounds after the offender; but, as the whole circumstances of the case gradually transpired, it is supposed that the pursuit was neither a very eager nor a very willing one. Certain it is, at any rate, that Rutherford could nowhere be found, although it is equally certain that several persons knew very well where he was for nearly two months after the death of Raeburn.

To these it was known that, immediately after the fatal occurrence in the hotel, a person closely wrapped up in a travelling-cloak called at Dr Henderson's, and desired to have a private interview with the doctor. When that gentleman entered the apartment into which the stranger had been shown, the latter announced himself to be Edward Rutherford, the brother of Fanny Rutherford, with whose melancholy story he said the doctor was so well acquainted.

"The brother of poor Fanny!" said the doctor, in amazement, and at the same time taking his visiter kindly by the hand. "I am happy to see you, sir, on your poor unfortunate sister's account. Did you come with the ship that arrived from England to-day, sir?"

"I did, sir," replied Edward.

"And pray, my dear sir," said the doctor, "if it be not an impertinent question—I assure you it is put with the most friendly intentions—what may be your purpose and views in coming out to India?"

"Vengeance, doctor! vengeance!" replied Rutherford, fiercely, "was my sole object—and I have already had it."

"Raeburn!" exclaimed the doctor, eagerly.

"Yes, sir, Raeburn is no more—his villanous career is ended. I have killed the ruffian; but, thank God! I killed him in fair fight. Villain as he was, I took no advantage of him, farther than compelling him to fight me." Edward then went on to detail the whole proceedings connected with the duel in the hotel.

When he had concluded—

"On my word, sir," said Dr Henderson, smiling—he could not help it—"you have made quick work of it indeed; and I assure you, I for one am not sorry that the villain has met with his deserts. But we must now care for your safety, Mr Rutherford, from the vengeance of the laws," added the doctor; "although I do not see how they can be very severe in such a case as this. Yet it will be as well for you to keep out of harm's way for a little. You must remain for some time in concealment; and a fitter or more secure place than I shall provide for you in my house here, you could not readily find anywhere; and I must insist on your availing yourself of it."

Edward did not know how to express the gratitude he felt for the singular and most disinterested kindness of his worthy host. He was, in truth, too strongly impressed with it to be able to acknowledge it otherwise than by a few broken sentences; but there was in these, and still more in the manner in which they were spoken, enough to show Dr Henderson that his friendly conduct was properly appreciated.

"Nothing at all, my dear sir!—nothing at all!" said the doctor, in reply to Edward's attempts at acknowledgment of the generous part he was acting towards him. "I'm very sure you would do the same for me, were I placed in your situation. You have, besides, Mr Rutherford—although

perhaps, a strict morality might question your right to the step you have taken—you have, I say, notwithstanding this, a claim on the friendly services of every man who can feel for the wrongs of another, especially—most especially—such grievous wrongs as yours. It was a just, and, on the part of him who has suffered, a well-merited retribution."

Edward was shortly afterwards introduced into the place of concealment—a comfortable little apartment, which had been prepared for him by the kindness of the worthy doctor; and here he remained for about seven weeks, experiencing every kindness and attention from his benevolent host, when he was secretly conveyed on board of a ship about to sail for London, where he arrived in safety, at the expiry of somewhere about the usual period occupied in such a voyage.

On his return home, Edward found his father at the point of death. The fate of his unfortunate daughter was hurrying him to the grave. Edward had not told him what was his object in going out to India; but the old man had guessed it, and had made several ineffectual attempts to dissuade him from his purpose. On the former now approaching his bedside, therefore, "Thank God!" he said, stretching out his hand to Edward, "that I see you safe again, my son;" and added—afraid to be more particular in his inquiries—"have you seen Raeburn?"

"I have, father," was the only reply of his son; but it was said in a manner, and accompanied by a look, which assured him of what had taken place.

"I cannot approve, Edward, of what you have done," said his father; "but God will forgive you!"

They were the last words he spoke; and Raeburn's villany boasted yet another victim.

THE PROFESSOR'S TALES.

THE ENTHUSIAST.

THERE is a splendid book written, called "The Enthusiast;" but, though it discovers the author's talents, to my apprehension and feelings, it fails, after a few pages, to keep alive the attention—and why? Just because the author, portraying the general character of enthusiasm, steps beyond himself and his own personal observations, and talks about the workings of the principle in a new and untried combination of circumstances. From the law which regulates projectiles in *aere*, he reasons to what should regulate them *in vacuo;* he reasons from things seen to things unseen; and then leaves both himself and his reader in the mud and the mist of mere supposition. But, in what I mean to say of enthusiasm, I pledge myself to state nothing but what I have felt or seen; and I shall separate this principle from all others, only marking its influence when it is in a state of intensity, as one marks the electric spark, not in the cloud or the machine, but as it passes from one locality to another. Enthusiasm is, in fact, the electrical element of life. It is more or less everywhere, and often where it is least suspected. It bursts forth, occasionally, in the character of the warrior, the scholar, the poet, the speculator; but it remains as substantially, perhaps, though not so ostensibly, in the bosom of the parent, the husband, the wife, the child, the friend, the kinsman. The tradesman is an enthusiast, if he hopes to succeed; the merchant, the labourer, the mechanic. I have seen a shoemaker as enthusiastic in making his shoes fit neatly without pinching, as the scholar would be in divining the meaning of a difficult passage. Without enthusiasm

man had never been what he is. It found him in the world naked, and it clothed him; houseless, and it covered him; defenceless, and it armed him. It run him up through the pastoral, the agricultural, to the commercial state. It composed the "Idylls" of Theocritus, the "Georgics" of Virgil, and the "Fleece" of Dyer. Without this there had been no shepherds to sing, and no poets to sing of their singing; no husbandmen to labour, and no Virgils and Hesiods to speak of their labour and argonautic expeditions; and no sacred bard to celebrate their pursuit of the golden fleece, commerce. But, though all this is true, in the enlarged and diluted sense of the word, it is not so in that sense in which the term is commonly understood. He is quite an enthusiast in the pursuit of knowledge—of a fox—or of hoped-for discovery—or of fame or of fortune—anybody knows to be terms applied to an unusually spirited pursuit of any or all of these. But the enthusiasm of which I speak is more limited still. It is a glow which originates and cools in the same bosom; which has no view beyond itself. It is not a mean to an end, but mean and end in one. Look at that boy: he is never to be found at a leisure hour without a fishing-rod in his hand; at that other youth—his book is his constant companion by the fountain and the hill; at that religious devotee—prayer and Bible-reading are his heaven; at that butcher's boy, who is now killing a lamb—his father has put the knife into his hand to please him—he is an enthusiast in butchery—his passion feeds on itself: it is, like virtue, its own reward—he cares not for cutlets or brown roasts.

Having thus narrowed the field to a class, I shall now select an individual, and that individual shall be one with whom I have had many opportunities of becoming well acquainted. Curious reader, it is not you, nor your brother Robert, nor your uncle Andrew, nor any, so far as I know, of your kindred—it is "myself." And how has enthusiasm

wrought in me? That I am just going to tell you. It has made me, in the first place, miserable—most miserable; and I'll tell you how. I took it into my head, when a boy of about eight or nine years of age, that my mother—my only living parent—was mortal; nay, that she was so old and infirm—though she was not more than fifty, and in perfect health—that she would drop down dead, even before my eyes. I followed her wherever she went; held on by her apron-string, roaring aloud most mournfully, and shedding, besides, a world of tears. In vain did my kind mother endeavour to rally me, to reason me, to scold me, and even to chastise me, out of my dream: it had taken such hold of my imagination, that, sleeping or waking, it was there. When my mother travelled anywhere abroad, I was sure to be after her, like a domestic cur. When she went to offer up her private oblations to a throne of mercy, I crept in under her plaid, and heard every audible aspiration. In my sleep she was still before me as I had seen my grandmother—the lips parted, the eyes open, and set in night. It was horrible. I started into real life, and wept aloud. I rushed into my mother's apartment, felt her face all over, and cried bitterly. Reader, have you always been made of pot-mettle? Have you never experienced any such nervous enthusiasm as this? Have you been at all times a child of realities—a very steady, thinking, prudent person; slept like a top, ate like a raven, and talked to the amazement even of the minister himself? You may be a steady, good person now. You may even be married, with a family of thirteen children. You may have succeeded in the world, and feathered your nest. You may have presided well at various public dinners, and

> "Never wrote
> One line which, dying, you would wish to blot;"

and for this simple and best of all reasons, that you have never written, as far as the public is concerned, any lines

at all. You may be a sound-headed lawyer, a calculating merchant, an honest shopkeeper, or, what is still more commendable, because more rare, an honest judge. You may sole shoes or make greatcoats to a nicety—fabricate chairs, or nails, or pins, or periwigs, to a thought; but you are no enthusiast. Do you see that poor maniac, who is just receiving a visit from his mother in his cell, whose eyes are turned up in wild uproar to the roof of his dungeon, and who, in the damp icicles, is apostrophising sun, moon, and stars, Venus, Jupiter, and Aldubaran? That emaciated form of scarcely twenty years of age, which a weeping mother clasps, and whom a frenzied son convulsively strains to his bare and fleshless breast—that is Ferguson, the poet, the prince of enthusiasts—he at whose genius Burns lighted that torch which has filled the world with light. Do you mark that form sitting amongst the sands of Syracuse? The city is taken by the Roman armies. The enemy are within the walls; pillage and murder are the order of the hour. But what is that to him?—he is only an enthusiast. The soldier has challenged him to surrender; his sword is uplifted, and the challenge is repeated. He heeds it not; the sword descends—and the greatest mathematician, the most complete enthusiast, which the world has ever seen, lies before you, a gashed and mangled corpse. The world—its wonders, its atoms, its various formations!—the laws—the eternal laws of its construction and form!—there is one who sung sweetly—oh, how divinely! There is one who sung sublimely—yes, as one overpowered with the spirit of Him who said, "Let there be light, and there was light;" but the cord which was overstrained is snapped, and the bow is unstrung; the pressure upon the delicate fibres of the brain has been too much, and the building of God has given way. Poor Lucretius! the disease of which thou didst expire was "enthusiasm."

But it is time to shift the scene—to resort to that ex-

quisite happiness, and extensive benefit to society, which enthusiasm is calculated to produce. Poetry is the language of nature. All languages originated in poetry; the ballad is the mother of all living and dead books. Whether it be repeated in the shape of Fescenine catches on the banks of the Tiber, of glorious epic on those of the Scamander, of chivalrous narrative by the rapid Rhone or sweet Liger—whether it employ the time and the enthusiastic efforts of the bard, the troubadour, the harper, or the minstrel—whether it resound through the recesses of Pindus, of Arcady, or of Yarrow—still, still the ballad presents the first germ of literature. What are the earlier pages of Livy's "History" but popular ballads, connected and narratived? What the history of our own Scotland—of her Bruces, and Wallaces, and all her many and valorous achievements—but ballads? And

> "How canst thou resist the boundless store
> Of charms which Nature to her votaries yields—
> The warbling woodland—the resounding shore—
> The pomp of groves—and garniture of fields—
> * * * * *
> Oh, how canst thou resist, and hope to be forgiven!"

But who can or does resist? Not even the robber Moor, who soliloquises so poetically the setting sun. Not

> "The swain who, journeying homeward from
> A day's long labour, feels
> The form of beauty smiling on his soul."

Poetry is spread as widely through the human heart as is electricity through all the works of nature. Man can no more help being poetical, than he can new-model his frame. But what is the love—the passion of poetry—but enthusiasm—enthusiasm which converts everything it looks upon into beauty and sublimity? The man is born desert and lonely: and is there no beauty in solitude—no grandeur in expansion? The mountains are highland, wild, heathy.

and tempest-beaten: and is there no sublimity in their cliffs, their scarred fronts, and scarred sides? The landscape is covered with wood, or there is at least a pleasing alternation of forest and glade, of peopled levels and wooded hills: and does not the soul nestle softly and lovingly amidst these pleasing varieties? But you are making faces, and there is something like an incipient yawn beginning to travel over your beauteous lips, my dearest madam. Well, I'll have done with advising you to wed the "spirit of poetry," if you wish to be completely happy. You need not write poems, ma'am—that is not necessary; Livy never wrote poetry, and yet he is every inch a poet. Robertson never wrote verse, and yet he is essentialy poetical. Witness Mexico and Montezuma. "Am I lying on a bed of roses?"—There, for example, is me *now*—ay, just me—I am every inch a poet! and yet, with the exception of a few things which need not be excepted, I never wrote any poetry:—yet I see you want a story, and you say, am I not reading "The Tales of the Borders, and of Scotland?"—I cry you mercy, and shall give you the results of my enthusiasm.

When in Edinburgh, at the college, while others prolonged the debauch, it might be, till two or three of a fine moonlight night, I have stolen away about twelve, taken my course through the King's Park to the Echoing Rock, and from thence to that long hollow valley of Bagdad, which runs betwixt Arthur Seat and Salisbury Craigs, and there I have seen the Island of Inchkeith lying, like a glittering diamond, on the face of the deep and the silver sea, and hazy shores of Fife, and the fleecy heavens, and the stars, and the "bonny lady moon," and two figures in the moonlight; they are walking away from me, and are busily engaged in conversation—they do not perceive me—I will ensconce myself behind this large stone till I see what may happen. They have now sat down on the greensward, and I hear their voices very much

elevated. The woman is reproaching the man in loud and angry tones—the man makes no reply; or, if he does, it is in an under tone—Ha! he has sprung upon the woman all at once, like a tiger, and she screams, "Murder, murder!" aloud. Shall I allow a poor woman to be murdered in the solitude of nature, without making an effort, even at the risk of my own life, to save her? My resolution, nerved by the wine I had drunk, was taken in an instant—I sprang forward, crying loudly to my *companions* to assist me. When the horrible object understood how things were going, and imagining, no doubt, that there were more than *one* witness of its horrible doings, it took to its heels with the speed of lightning. I did not pursue; in fact, I had no inclination to do so; it was sufficient for me if I could save life—I did not wish to take it, either personally or legally. When I went up to the poor woman, she was all astonishment, and her first accents were uttered in thanksgiving to Almighty God for sending me into the desert for her rescue. I found that, although the villain had clutched her by the throat, he had not had time to suffocate her. Her throat was indeed sore from the pressure, and she breathed for some time with difficulty; but there were no deadly symptoms about her. What a mysterious Providence is about us!—and we often know it not. I had originally no intention of taking a moonlight walk that evening, or rather morning, had it not been to avoid the impertinence of a fellow-member of the Dialectic Society, who manifestly wished, in his cups, to fasten a quarrel upon me. I stepped out from Young's, and was off. I was manifestly the messenger of Heaven, and could not help regarding myself with a kind of reverence. The poor woman, who was in fact the wife of this worthless man, gave me her history, to the following purpose:—

That brute, as you very properly call him, is my husband, and was once as kind and affectionate to me as I

could wish. Ours was what is called a pure love marriage, for I was born to better circumstances and prospects than, from my present condition and appearance, you may well imagine. (Here the poor woman shed tears, and proceeded.) I was the daughter of a small proprietor in the neighbourhood of Durham, where the Princess of Wales' regiment of Light Dragoons was raised, and was then lying, under the command of Lord Darlington. We—that is to say, my father, my mother, my sister, and myself—used to go frequently into a field adjoining the city, and see this really handsome regiment reviewed, and go through their exercise. One day there was a mock battle represented, in the very field adjoining to my father's house. Several regiments were collected together, from Newcastle and elsewhere, for the purpose. It was to be a great show; and the whole town of Durham, as well as all the country round, were congregated to see the battle. Cannons were fired, charges of cavalry were made, and a detachment of the Darlington troop rode, in pursuit of the supposed enemy, past our door. My father and I were at the upper window when the troop came dashing along, clearing fences and springing over ditches in the finest style imaginable. Just as they came opposite to my father's door, a pig, which had escaped from its confinement in the back-court, dashed headlong forward amongst the feet of the horses. One of the horses fell; and the rider, having pitched on his head, was seemingly killed on the spot. He was immediately carried into our house, and surgical aid was at hand. It was a dislocation of the neck-bone, and was immediately put to rights; but the patient was bled, and ordered to be kept quiet for some days. I naturally became the young gentleman's nurse; for he was the son of a poor but titled family in the neighbourhood of Darlington. Mr Fitzwilliam was a handsome man, about my own age; but he was penniless, and a soldier of fortune. My father, early

seeing the danger of my remaining in the way of temptation, had sent me off to a grand house in the neighbourhood of Newcastle. But William Fitzwilliam had won my heart, and, in spite of all watchings and lookings, we were man and wife in less than a fortnight after my departure for Newcastle.

We were married at Gretna Green; and I have accompanied him ever since, through Carlisle and Dumfries, Ayr, Glasgow, and ultimately to Jock's Lodge, where the regiment is now lying. He has taken lodgings for me in Edinburgh; but of late has sadly deserted me. I have been enabled, by taking up linen, and sewing articles for the ladies' exhibition, to do something in aid of our scanty funds. But William has of late undergone a sad change. He has become addicted to gambling; has even introduced improper characters, both male and female, into my presence; and has talked, particularly in his cups, about a divorce and separation. He wishes *me*, he says, to divorce him; and takes every method of giving me sufficient grounds for so doing; but, with all his errors and vices, I love him still, nor can I think, now that I have time to reflect on it, he would have murdered me outright, even though you had not so providentially interfered. He has of late succeeded to a title, by the death of an uncle, who has disinherited him, and left his vast property past him. This preyed upon his spirits of late; and I have reason to know that he has been making love, and even offers of marriage, to a rich widow lady, who dwells not far from York Place, Edinburgh. But my marriage-lines lie sadly in his way; and it was to attain by force what he could not otherwise, that he had almost, and, but for you, would have perhaps altogether, murdered me, a few minutes ago. Poor William! my heart still bleeds for him; but I will never give up, whilst I live, the only means which I have of proving myself an honest woman.

All Edinburgh rang next morning with the news—Lord M—— had shot himself dead in his bedroom.

In the year 1831, I had occasion to be several days in Durham. It occurred to me, one day, whilst I was sauntering about the cathedral, that the house, where probably still lived the father of the poor unfortunate Mrs, or rather *Lady* M——, might be in the neighbourhood. I made inquiry; and, without much difficulty, found it out. From what I learned in the neighbourhood, the poor woman had never taken up her husband's title. Her father, on hearing of her husband's tragical end, had relented, and taken her home, to keep his house, and comfort him in his old age. I asked for her father, and was shown into a neat parlour, where the old man sat, comfortably pillowed, but terribly pained with gout and a complication of diseases. I introduced myself as an acquaintance of Mrs Fitzwilliam, who was immediately sent for, and entered the parlour. She did not know me, nor was it wonderful; for, as I went to the country next day after the night adventure, I had no opportunity of calling upon her. Indeed, I should scarcely have known her either—her dress and manner were so much more imposing than they had been at our first and only interview. However, upon my referring to the circumstances, she immediately took me by the hand, burst into tears, and, presenting me to her father, who was almost blind, "Papa," said she, "this is the gentleman who saved my life." I had the old man's blessing. A bottle of home-made wine was called for, and discussed, and I was pressed to come back to dinner; which, however, I politely refused, for I did not know how far my enthusiastic temperament might have gone, in the case of a truly beautiful woman, whom I had saved from death, and whose gratitude led her to think very favourably of me. I have not heard of her lately; but mean to write to my brother-in-law, who lives in Durham, about her, and to ascertain whether she is still living or

dead; whether she is yet unmarried, or has again ventured to face the blacksmith.

Such was one of my moonlight adventures; which, if you are so disposed, you are at liberty to denominate a "matter of moonshine." But my enthusiasm has not been limited to moonbeams. I am the mountain child, and wedded even up to this hour to the mountain-land, with all its wild, striking, and expanding associations. To meet a fair maiden in a *fair* is pleasant, as also to replenish her lap with sweetmeats and trinkets. To get a "canny hour at een, your arms about your deary," is snug, comfortable, and something more. Burns prefers "rigs of barley," and the "green rush bushes," as a courting parlour; whilst,

> "Last night, in my late rambles,
> All in the Isle of Sky,
> I met a lovely creature
> Up in the mountains high."

Now the Isle of Sky, and its high mountains, are entire strangers to me; but I am well acquainted with two pretty decent hills, not above twenty miles from Dumfries, called Queensberry, *little* and *big;* and, amidst their elevated and retired glens, the following incident took place. I have from my boyhood been distractedly fond of fishing; and, up to this hour, whenever I visit my native glen, the mania returns; and, though things are sadly changed, and trouts are diminished both in number and size, yet still, in spite of all disadvantages, I fish. It was on an excursion on my way (whilst a young man of twenty) from college, that I found myself, one dark and misty day, amidst the deep and mazy windings of the *Brawn.* I was quickly and successively basketing trout after trout, humming all the while some old Scottish sonnet, and calling in my little dog, *Don,* from the sheep who were pasturing on the adjoining hill, named the Dod, when a voice from the depths of the mist and the solitude reached my ear. It was a voice of wo

and deep lamentation. Having chid Don's impertinence in giving tongue somewhat too freely, I found, seated upon a grey stone, and weeping aloud, a young woman, about my own age, with dark blue eyes, and a countenance of the most prepossessing expression. She sat beside an infant, which she had deposited on a bed of collected fern or braken, and who was fast asleep. When she saw me, she started, and seemed disposed to fly; but when I used my means to reassure her, she ventured to accost me, by informing me that she had lost her way—that she was nurserymaid at Mitchelslacks, and had wandered that morning with her charge beyond her accustomed range, and, the mist coming suddenly on, she found it impossible to retrace her steps. I thought myself quite in possession of the information which she wanted, and told her that I would see her and her little charge safely and immediately home. So, giving up my sport for the time, I took up the sleeping infant, and immediately addressed myself, accompanied by the fair wanderer, to the journey. We were several miles distant from Mitchelslacks; but, as I considered myself quite familiar with the ground, I struck immediately over the pathless hill, by what I termed a *near cut*, instead of retracing the stream for a couple of miles, and then crossing the Dod by a cart track. The child awoke, and finding itself in strange hands, screamed violently; so I was soon compelled to place the infant in the loveliest bosom I had ever seen. I felt my frame tremble all over, as I came into contact with pretty Peggy's person; and yet, for all the wealth of old Q——, I would not have even conceived anything which might occasion alarm to so beautiful and manifestly so innocent a creature. Yet I could not keep my eyes off her, and found out, in spite of a dark and crawling mist, that her frame was perfect symmetry, and rounded into that ripened plumpness which bespeaks the fully-matured woman. We conversed freely as we travelled; and my romantic feelings became so excited

with my position, that I thought but occasionally, and then indistinctly, of the direction, right or wrong, in which we were advancing. Peggy from time to time admonished me, that she trusted to me alone, as she was totally unacquainted with the hill. Having attained at last the summit of the steep, I expected to have found a cairn of stones, and, alongside of it a shepherd's shieling or turf hut, where he reposed at noonday, and shared his bread and milk with his faithful curs; but no such shieling or cairn was to be seen. It then became manifest to me, all at once, that I as well as my fair companion of the mist had lost my way, and that, unless the day, which was still becoming darker and darker, should clear up, we should be in danger of increasing instead of lessening the distance betwixt us and Mitchelslacks. To increase our embarrassment, the child cried continually, evidently from hunger, and great drops of rain came down like hail-stones amidst the close and crawling mist. It was evident that a thunderstorm was brooding—nor were we long kept in suspense; for, all at once, the mist was kindled into flame around us, and a sharp, smart crack, followed by the roar of a thousand hills, told us that we were in the very centre of the electric cloud. Poor Peggy sank down at once, overcome with terror; whilst I, immediately and intuitively, squatted down beside her, clasping her to my bosom, child and all. I may truly say with Patie, in regard to another lovely Peggy—

> "Whilst hard and fast I held her in my grips,
> My very soul cam loupin to my lips."

But the awful flash and peal were repeated, and then, in very truth, and not metaphorically,

> "Down rush'd a deluge of sonorous hail."

Peggy fainted outright, and the child screamed itself into hysterics, when all at once a couple of shaggy shepherd's dogs gave tongue in the neighbourhood. A young, yellow haired shepherd lad stood over us in an instant; and,

guessing at once how matters really stood, had us all removed, as soon as Peggy had recovered her senses, into the small shieling, in the immediate neighbourhood of which we were unconsciously wandering. We had to stoop, and enter upon our hands and knees; and, when we were all stowed away, there was not an inch of house room which was not occupied either by human beings or dogs. But, though sitting, or rather lying, on rushes, these rushes were dry, and our humble shelter warded off the merciless pelting, whilst the thunder-cloud gradually took to the top of the higher Queensberry, and left us with a clear sunny day, and two miles to walk to the child's home. The truth was, that the family at Mitchelslacks had become alarmed by the absence of maid and child, and had sent nearly half-a-score of shepherds, and a full score of dogs, to the hills and glens, on a voyage of discovery; whilst Mr and Mrs Harkness, the parents, were in a state which may more easily be imagined than described. All were now well; and I accompanied the young shepherd, with his sweetheart—for such I soon discovered they were—home, and had the happiness, by running on before, to be the first to announce the safety of their child to the worthy and distracted parents. They had, indeed, given up both the nurse and child for lost, and their despair had been at least equal to their joy, when I ran forward and threw the child in the mother's lap. Now, who could doubt that enthusiasm was abounding in the breast, and shining in the tear-wet eye of the mother, as she pressed the little lost one to her bosom? It was, verily. But, after all I have said of the nature of this extraordinary feeling, I know not if it is ever experienced in a stronger and purer form than in that of *joy*. I care nothing for the cause—it may be any one you please. All I insist for is, that it shall be capable of stimulating, or rather exciting—for the former is a phrenological word—the mind of the individual, however stupid,

obese, or phlegmatic, to the boiling-point of that most intense species of human happiness. All the many forms of the feeling seem to tend to this as the point of their realisation. Pythagoras and his proposition, Argand and his lamp, Mungo Park and the waters of the Joliba, Mrs Harkness and her child, and the child, probably, next day with a butterfly, are all instances of the feeling in the point of gratification. But I have been again wandering from my story—all enthusiasm together; for there was love in the affair, which many insist upon being the strongest, if not the purest, example that can be presented of this mysterious and pervading essence. Those who think so can take their own view; I retain mine; and it is very probable that we are both wrong; and you, ma'am, to whom I formerly addressed myself, will put us right, by telling us that poetry is the only genuine and pure form in which this moral electricity can exhibit itself. Let it be as you say, though I would advise you to be on your guard against your friend Miss ——, who lost her lover last week, and will insist that *hope* is the soul of the feeling; and that, when that is gone, enthusiasm has no more chance of getting into the mind or heart than I have of getting into your favour by this digression from a story of love, originating in, or perfected by, *mist*, one of the most romantic mediums of the tender passion. So, to make a speedy conclusion, about a fortnight after this incident, I was again at my old sport, when I was accosted by my young friend, the shepherd, who now figured in holiday-attire, and informed me that, as this was his wedding-day, my company would be acceptable *owre by yonder* at two o'clock. I pursued my sport till then, and, in the old chamber of Mitchelslacks, saw Joseph Robson and Margaret Gibson made man and wife. There was neither dancing nor revelment of any kind, but there was a plentiful meal, many songs, and as much punch, prepared in a large bowl, as the company chose to make use of. All went merry as

a marriage-bell. And now I find I am checked by want of space, at the moment when the *jar* is fully charged, and the subtle spirit might have exploded in many more pretty coruscations.

TREES AND BURNS.

Woods, natural woods, are most beautiful. To wander all day long amongst bushes, hazels, oaks, thorns, of every hue and fruit—the haw, crab, and sloe—is most delightful. To lose one's-self, as it were, at every turn, and to be arrested by some new feature, ever and anon, as you thread your mazy course through the pathless wood, is a pleasure, the recollection of which still haunts and sweetens my dreams of early being—

> "In life's morning march,
> When my bosom was young."

I don't like forests—they are too stiff and stately—they are like a tea-and-turn-out party—sombre, silent, and affected. They have not the easy negligence, the elegant simplicity, the "*simplex munditiis*," of woods. They are always on their high horses, and darken whilst they look down upon and despise the underwood. I had as rather associate with a conclave of high churchmen or consulting doctors, as with a regular, well-planted, and well-fenced plantation. Here man has played the tailor with nature; and, in cutting down her skirts, has deprived her of all that is graceful in drapery and folding. He has made a Bond Street exquisite of the subject. But, far and beyond all other inanimate objects, I have always been in love with single, individual, separate trees. You cannot be truly—as the song has it—in love with many *fair dames* at one and the same time; I can never, on that account, bear to hear the song sung, which begins thus—

> "I'm in love with twenty,
> I'm in love with twenty,

And I adore as many more—
There's nothing like a plenty."

I absolutely quarrelled with an old friend for his frequent singing of this abominable and heretical song, and am scarcely reconciled to him to this hour, though he has long ago limited his love to one object—he has been married these thirty years. In the same spirit, and on the same principle, I affirm, that no child, boy, girl, man, or woman, can be truly in love with *two trees* at one and the same time. Oh! I remember well the old ash-tree that occupied the corner of our kail-yard. There the same pyet built yearly her nest, and brought *out* and *up* her young. To be sure I *tithed* them occasionally, and taught her offspring to imitate speaking most abominably; but still the old lady and gentleman returned to their tree and their branch, and even to the same cleft of the branch, annually; and my spirit rejoiced within me, as I lifted up mine eyes and beheld the black-and-white tail of the dam, as she sat, from morn to night, upon her beautifully-spotted, black-and-white eggs. There, underneath that very tree, I did sit and construct my first paper kite; there did I play from morn to night with the cat and her kitten; there did I shelter myself from the shower, and from the meridian heat; there did I repeat my morning and evening prayer (short, it is true, but pithy—it was the Lord's Prayer, with an additional petition in behalf of my only surviving parent, my mother); there did I count my slain on returning from fishing expeditions; and there, my dear departed friend and cousin, did you and I associate, eve after eve, in true and holy affection. Alas! the cold earth has closed over one of the kindest hearts and clearest heads I ever had occasion to know anything about; but God's will be done. We all hasten to the same place, however different our courses. Peace, my dear companion, to thy manes! We shall meet, I hope, anon. In the meantime, I was speaking of the old ash-tree at Auldwa's, which

I have taken the liberty to transplant to Dunsyett. But our common friend, and the friend of many past generations, is now laid prostrate (as I am informed) with the earth. How is the mighty fallen, and the lofty laid low, and the strong one broken and smashed in his strength! The storm, the dreadful, unexampled storm, which lately swept over our island with a whirlwind's impetuosity and a hurricane's strength, has bent the gallant mast, and sunk the noble ship, and buried its thousands and thousands of fathers, and brothers, and husbands, and wives, and daughters in the deep sea. It has uptorn forests, scattered woods to the heavens, and *(inter alia)* has stooped from its altitude to lay my old and dear companion prostrate. How many tempests, my poor uprooted friend, hast thou not braved!—nay, when the fire of heaven split and splintered the adjoining oak and ash, thou didst escape unhurt. The awful tempest of winter 1794–5, deprived thee, indeed, of a branch or two; but thou wert still in the manhood of thy being, when the west wind blew as "'twad blaw its last"—and M'Diarmid's newspaper is enriched with thy remains.

My next associate of the tree species was the "*Castle Beech.*" Oh, what a tree it was, and still (I humbly hope) is!—for the hand of man is not yet formed in the womb which will dare to cut it down; and it stands mighty in its individual girth, awful in its spread, and sheltered in its position. This tree is the chronicler of my school days at Wallacehall: on the smooth and ample bark of that tree are imprinted or obliterated recollections of a fearful nature. Oh! who dares to take a peep into the charnel-house of fifty years? There they are, playing it hard and happy, at dools toosty, or England and Scotland.

> "Alas! regardless of their doom,
> The little victims play:
> No sense have they of ills to come—
> No cares beyond to-day!"

But let forty years, with Juggernaut wheels, crash and creak over us, and where are the happy hearts and merry voices? The sea will answer; for she has had her full share. The river, the bloody river *Nith*, will and must answer; for in its deceitful waters was lost my old and kind class-fellow and companion, Richard Reid. The west must give up its dead, and the east answer to my call. Where am I? My dear schoolfellows, where are you? Why don't you answer? Alas! *at sixty*, I can scarcely count six contemporaries who still breathe with me the breath of heaven, and rejoice in a protracted though misimproved existence. But the old beech, my kind friend Mr Watt of the castle informs me, is still standing, though almost by a miracle, for his branches are so large and numerous that he groaned, and creaked, and swung most dreadfully under the tempest's shock. But it would not do; even the prince of the aerial powers was foiled at last, and was compelled to desist from his unhallowed attempt. The Castle Beech has weathered the storm; and there are hearts in every land which will rejoice in the information which I now convey.

But the "Three Brethren," the friends and companions of my more mature years, are now no more. They have fallen with those cedars of Lebanon, the mighty monarchs of Arbigland--*they* have perished, and in their fate have nearly involved that of their intelligent and benevolent proprietor. But my heart reverts to Collestoun, and to the banks of the blue and silver Nith, and to the Three Brethren. The pages of the intelligent "Times" (county newspaper) are wet with the tears of lamentation. But the "Times" knows not—it could not, and it cannot know —the one-half that honest Allan Cunningham and I know about these remarkable trees. Their traditional history is this:—

Prior to the discovery of Virginia, and of the consequent tobacco trade, by means of which Glasgow, from being a

comparatively insignificant town, became a large and a prosperous mercantile city, and whilst Manchester, in England, was almost equally obscure and unimportant, there was no properly-constructed highway through Dumfriesshire betwixt these two mercantile depôts. There was, indeed, along the banks of the Nith, the trace of the old Roman road; but this was obscure, in many places obliterated, and in all narrow and unaccommodating to wheel-carriages. Indeed, the road in many cases was impracticable, unless on horses; and these, too, in some places, were in danger of disappearing in mosses and quagmires. In this state of things, to talk of or think of inns, or public-houses of accommodation, was out of the question. *Where there is no demand, there can be no supply*—that is a clear case; yet still a certain overland intercourse was carried on betwixt these two great national marts, Glasgow and Manchester; and a merchant from the one city was in the habit of mounting a strong nag, and meeting with a merchant from the other city at what was deemed the *half-way point*—at the place, namely, where a large tree, with three outspread and sheltering branches, not only marked the spot of tryst, but afforded partial shade and shelter. (The reason why these branches were afterwards denominated the Three Brethren has already formed the subject of a tale.) Well, by previous arrangement and appointment, the Glasgow and the Manchester merchants met and transacted business under this tree, and then retraced their steps homewards; and this continued for many years to be the nearest and the most commonly-frequented line of communication betwixt Glasgow and Manchester. It was in this way, originally, that the benevolent founder of the free school of Closeburn, Mr Wallace, a native of that parish, and a Glasgow merchant, carried on this extensive business with Manchester. Many a time has the worthy founder of the most celebrated institution in the south of

Scotland (with which the name of Mundell will be associated till latest ages) been seen sitting upon a stone rolled to the foot of this immense tree, and transacting business with a Manchester merchant, similarly placed with himself. In process of time, the international intercourse increased—post-chaises succeeded to strong saddle horses, the roads were improved, and an inn, or house of accommodation, became absolutely necessary. It was on this occasion that the once famous, though now comparatively obscure inn, called of late years Brownhill, arose—an inn resorted to by travellers of all ranks, in preference to any which even Dumfries in former times could afford—an inn celebrated as the frequent resort of Robert Burns, who used to hold high carousal here with its former convivial landlord, Mr Bacon; in whose house, and on one of the panes of glass in the window, were originally written those well-known lines of Burns, beginning—

> "Cursed be the man, the veriest wretch in life,
> The crouching vassal to the tyrant wife,
> Who has no will but by her high permission—
> Who has not sixpence but in her possession. . .
> I'd charm her with the magic of a switch," &c.

As I happen to know the particular circumstances which accompanied the writing of these lines, I shall conclude this chapter on trees, by relating them.

Burns lived at this time at Ellisland, about two miles lower down the vale than the Three Brethren, and about three miles from Brownhill. Much of his duty as a gauger lay about the village of Brownhill. Now, Brownhill was a very convenient half-way house betwixt Thornhill and his home at Ellisland; and, accordingly, Burns' little stout pony (which I remember well, though I forget the name) would seldom pass Brownhill. One day, whilst a boy at the free school of Wallacehall, I chanced to be lingering about the stable-door at Brownhill, when Burns alighted

from his pony, *wet and weary*, and, giving the beast a flap on the hinder extremity, exclaimed, "There! make you comfortable for the night, in the best way you can—and so will the poor gauger!" Burns looked at me very closely; but I was unknown to him at that time (though I knew him personally afterwards); and muttering, "One of Mundell's," passed on. What follows is from undoubted authority; namely, one of the party of three, who enjoyed this very merry evening. Bacon and Burns were their bowl of punch a-piece, as well as my friend, and were in high talk and song; but Mrs Bacon, who did not partake of the festivity, and who, in fact, was the support of the house, refused to produce the materials for the fourth bowl. High words arose betwixt her and her husband; who, as well as Burns and my friend, had by this time given indications of their having

"A wee drap in their ee;"

and Mrs Bacon hid the keys and went to bed. Ere Burns went to repose (or next morning), he inscribed, with his ready wit, and equally ready diamond, the lines mentioned on the window-pane.

KIRKYARDS.

Kirkyards are to me exceedingly interesting. Alas! those nearest and dearest to me are now the tenants of these silent retirements. They contain subjects of intense and protracted recollection. Whenever I have an hour to spare after dinner in my pedestrian wanderings, I am sure to deviate into a churchyard, and there to spell and stumble my way through and over a multiplicity of graves and monuments. But, instead of dealing in generalities, I shall speak of two particular cases, known to myself, in the churchyard of the parish of Closeburn. One is on your right hand as you enter and pass Elder Boe, on Sunday, at the church stile. The stone is merely an erect headstone, and of con-

siderable dimensions. The inscription is — "Here lies Richard Reid, aged 16, who perished in crossing the water of Nith in 1794." Richard, as well as his brother Stephen, now Colonel Reid, were my particular companions at Wallacehall School. We were class-fellows. Oh! what fun and frolic we have had together! The Castle Wood, Barmuir Wood, Gilchrist Land Wood, the Pothouse Wood, the Whitston Cleughs, and the Gravel Walk, could tell, if they were permitted, many tales of us three. What nests did we not find! what nuts did we not gather! what sloes did we not pocket! what brambles did we not eat! and what *hind* or raspberries did we not bruise and convert into *red wine.* And, then, what tree so tall as not to admit our ascent! what thicket so dense as not to be penetrated! what eel so lively as not to be decapitated and skinned! and what trout so cunning as to escape the temptation of our nicely-prepared baits! At England and Scotland, too—that most expressive game of former Border feuds—we were most expert; and have seen many suns descend on our protracted contests at shinty. But, alas! harvest arrived, and with it the vacation; the oats ripened, and so did the hazel-nuts. The report was, that the Barjarg Woods were most splendidly supplied with ripe and brown *leamers.* We could not—we never tried to resist the temptation. But the rapid river Nith lay betwixt us and the object of our travel. It had rained, but was now fair; and the water, when we arrived at its banks, did not seem even moved or swollen. Stephen and I hesitated; Richard was a bold, manly lad, somewhat older. He plunged at once into the stream, and bade us follow; so, indeed, we did. Ere we had gained one-third of the way, upon the stream we observed bits of wood and various floating substances in it. We became alarmed, and called aloud on Richard; but he turned round, and laughed us to scorn. We would not stand this, but pushed on, he still keeping in advance. The powerful

current had now reached his waist, and, even though he had wished to turn, he could not. The stones were beginning to creep from beneath our feet. All at once, a large piece of floating timber came down upon poor Richard's position, and he was borne away by the united force of the obstructed wood and the stream. He fell; the timber floated over him, and he again rose; but he was in much deeper water, and manifestly apprehended danger. He screamed aloud, and we rushed forward—his brother Stephen and I—to the rescue; but we were all instantly hurled along into a deep and whirling pool. Over the banks of this eddy there grew and hung a broom bush; more by accident than management, I got a hold of it. Stephen was struggling near me, and I caught him with the other hand. I struggled desperately, and got myself and my companion into the face of a soft and clay brow. I held like grim death, and at last surmounted the steep. Though stupified, I saw that one was awanting, and I rushed—for Stephen was insensible—along the brink of the pool. At the foot of it, and where the water began to shallow, I saw poor Richard tumbling over without any signs of life. In an instant I had a hold of his garment, and had actually pulled him considerably to one side, when, my feet coming in contact with a large stone, I fell backwards, lost my hold, and the body of poor Richard was found, next day, a mile and a-half below, at the bottom of Porter's Hole.

On the opposite side of this churchyard there is a flat flagstone, with the following inscription—"Here lie the mortal remains of William Herdman, weaver in Auldwa's of Gilchristland."

Poor Willie Herdman! What associations do not these two magic words awaken! When Gibraltar stood nobly out, under the command of an Elliot, against the combined strength of France and Spain, thou wast there to send the

hissing-hot cannon-balls into the hulls of the enemy's floating-batteries. But, on returning to thy native Nottingham, to taste of its pure and salubrious ales, thy house was desolate—father, mother, and sister, all dead—and the place which knew them owned another tenant. Thy heart sank within thee; and having been bred a weaver in thy youth, thou didst take the road for Glasgow; but, at Brownhill, chance brought thee acquainted with Archy Tait of Auldwa's, and with him didst thou ply thy trade till the mournful end of thy days. But it was neither as a soldier, nor as a weaver, that I remember thee with so much interest. It was as the best bait-fisher in the south of Scotland—it was as my first preceptor in that most delightful art. I see thee still, before sunrise, ten miles amidst the mountains, and I hear the plash of the large new-run sea-trout, as it "turns up its silver scaling to the light" amidst the dark-brown flood. At all times, and almost in all states of the weather and the water, thy skill was triumphant, and from thee I derived that art which no man knows, unless instructed by me, to this hour—the art of fishing *up*, and not *down*, a mountain stream, with prepared bait. But the hour of thy destiny at last arrived, and it was a mournful one. It was one of thy triumphs to kill a dish of trouts, even in the midst of frost, and at New-year's Day. A wager was laid, and a considerable sum of money was risked, on thy killing a dozen for a New-year's-day feast. On the last day of the old year, as the time approached, the weather had become boisterous, and snow-blasts, mixed with hail, were coursing along the skirts of Queensberry. I was a stout lad in the high class then, and, being in the constant habit of accompanying thee on thy fishing expeditions, I made a point of not being absent on this critical trial of thy skill. Accordingly, when the last day of December, 179–, dawned, I was by thee aroused from my slumbers, and, in spite of

all maternal remonstrances, I agreed to accompany thee to Caple. The day was dark and somewhat cloudy; but there was only a sprinkling of snow on the lower grounds, though the higher seemed to be much whiter. To fortify himself against the inclemency of the weather, poor Willie had provided himself with a supply of what he used to term "his comforter"—namely, some whisky in a bottle. We fished for about two hours in the deeper and unfrozen pools of Caple, and with amazing success. Willie had just killed his eleventh trout, when he turned up the bottom of a pint bottle, quite empty. He was not intoxicated, but confused. I had not enjoyed the advantage of "the comforter," and was consequently much more collected, and aware of our danger. It was betwixt twelve and one when the day suddenly darkened down, and a terrible snow-drift came up the glen. Mitchelslacks was at about a mile and a-half's distance. I strongly urged our retreat to that hospitable mansion in the wilderness; but Willie wanted one trout of his tale, and he persevered for about half-an-hour longer, when he was so fortunate as to complete his number. But by this time the snow-drift and wind were absolutely choking, and I could see that his eyes were half-shut. He was manifestly in a state of approaching stupor or sleep. I became exceedingly alarmed, when he sat, or rather fell, down suddenly beneath a projecting rock, saying that he would rest and sleep for a little, and then he would accompany me to Mitchelslacks, as I proposed. I tried to pull him along; but he was incapable of motion. What was to be done? Poor Willie, who had taught me to fish, and told me so many stories about the wars, and about Nottingham, and England, and who was really a kind-hearted, good-natured creature—poor Willie to perish thus helpless in the drift! I sprang on with renewed strength; but when I reached Mitchelslacks I fainted, and it was not till I recovered that Willie's danger-

ous state was learned. Three shepherds, with Mr Harkness at their head, and a suitable accompaniment of dogs, sallied forth, and in a short time reached the spot; but it was too late. There was still heat in the interior, but no motion; the pulse had stopped, and the body was sitting in a reclining posture, leaning against the stone. There were no marks of previous suffering—all was calm and placid in the marble countenance—the eyes shut, and the hands reposing on the fish-basket, as if the last thing he had done was to count his fish! He was dead!

POLWARTH ON THE GREEN.

PERADVENTURE there are few of our readers who have not heard of "Polwarth on the Green," and the "Polwarth Thorn." The song bearing the former title is certainly founded upon one of the most popular traditions on the Borders. Since the commencement of this publication, we have been many times requested to write a tale upon the subject, and not less than thrice, from different quarters, within the last seven days; and as we are at all times anxious to meet the wishes of our readers, we shall now endeavour to fulfil the request which has been made to us.

There are none to whom the traditions of other days are not interesting. They save from oblivion the memory, the deeds, and the manners, of our fathers. No nation is so sunk in barbarity as to disregard them: the civilised European and the Indian savage alike cherish them; and the poets of every land have wed them with song. Yet, nowhere are traditions more general or more interesting than upon the Borders. Every grey ruin has its tale of wonder and of war. The solitary cairn on the hillside speaks of one who died for religion, or for liberty, or belike for both. The very schoolboy passes it with reverence, and can tell the history of him whose memory it perpetuates. The hill on which it stands is a monument of daring deeds, where the sword was raised against oppression, and where heroes sleep. Every castle hath its legends, its tales of terror and of blood, "of goblin, ghost, or fairy." The mountain glen, too, hath its records of love and war. There history has let fall its romantic fragments, and the hills enclose them. The forest trees whisper of the past; and, beneath the shadow of

their branches, the silent spirit of other years seems to sleep. The ancient cottage, also, hath its traditions, and recounts

"The short and simple annals of the poor."

Every family hath its legends, which record to posterity the actions of their ancestors, when the sword was law, and even the payment of rent upon the Borders was a thing which no man understood; but, as Sir Walter Scott saith, "all that the landlord could gain from those residing upon his estate was their personal service in battle, their assistance in labouring the land retained in his natural possession, some petty quit-rents of a nature resembling the feudal casualties, and perhaps a share in the spoil which they acquired by rapine." Many of those traditions are calculated to melt the maiden's heart, to fill age with enthusiasm, and youth with love of country. But to our story.

In the year 1470, John Sinclair of Herdmanstone, in East Lothian, who was also Lord of Kimmerghame and Polwarth, dying without male issue, the estate of Kimmerghame descended to his daughter Marion, and that of Polwarth to her sister Margaret. His heir-male was his brother, Sir William Sinclair, to whom the estate of Herdmanstone fell. Sir William, as the uncle of the co-heiresses, though not appointed as their guardian by their father, for they were both well-nigh of woman's estate when he died, craftily took upon himself that duty. He whispered to them that their estates were not managed as they ought to be—that their bondmen did not perform the duty required of them—that those they had set over their grounds as stewards did not render them a faithful account of their stewardship. He insinuated a thousand suspicions into their young minds, until their affairs gradually fell into his hands, and he at length succeeded in gaining the entire management of their estates; and he now required only to have the disposal of their personal freedom. Men of power in those

days were not very scrupulous as to the means which they employed to obtain their object; he who had a score of retainers weighed the scales of life and death in his hands. Nevertheless, aware of the rank which his nieces held in the estimation of his country, Sir William knew that it would not be safe to venture upon making them prisoners by open violence. He therefore courteously invited them to his house at Herdmanstone, where he stated that the gayest and the proudest company in broad Scotland would be present to delight them. Marion, who was fond of amusements, was overjoyed at the invitation; but her sister Margaret, who was of a graver disposition, said—

"Well, sister, I like not our uncle's kindness—something sinful seems to laugh in his looks; the very movement of his lips bespeaks more than it reveals; confide in *me*, dear sister, and distrust *him*. When I was but a child, playing around our mother's knee, I have heard her say unto my father, 'Ah, John! I like not your brother; there is a cunning in his looks, in his very words; he cannot meet you with the straightforward gaze of an honest man; and methinks he looks upon me as though he distrusted and hated me; yea, I have often thought, as though he were plotting evil against me.' So our mother was wont to say; and my father would reply, 'Dear Elizabeth, think not so cruelly of one who is so near and dear to me; trust me, that he loves you and yours.'—'It may be so,' she would reply, 'but there is that in his manner which I cannot overcome.' Then our father would remain silent for a time, and add, 'Well, there is a want of frankness in Sir William which becomes not a brother.'"

"Lull your suspicions, my demure sister," the light-hearted Marion replied; "a thousand times have I heard him say that no one but the boldest baron in Scotland should wed his niece, Marion."

"And he said truly," replied Margaret; "for, if he have

us once within his power, not even the boldest knight in Scotland will be able to receive our hands, unless he sue for it with gallant bowmen at his back, and the unsheathed sword to enforce his suit."

"Oh, then, sister," subjoined Marion, "I suppose you have a knight at hand who would delight in such handiwork; for is not Sir Patrick Hume of Wedderburn reputed to be the most valorous knight upon the Borders, and withal the humble worshipper of fair Margaret Sinclair of Polwarth?"

And as the maiden spoke, she laughed, and tapped her sister good-naturedly upon the cheek. Margaret blushed, and playfully replied, "Well, sister, is there no valorous knight at Wedderburn but Sir Patrick? What think ye of George Hume?"

"No more of this," cried Marion; "let us accept our uncle's invitation, and mingle with the gay company he has invited to meet us."

"If you will have it so, let it be so," replied Margaret; "but, trust me, I fear that good will not come of it."

On the following day they set out upon their journey towards Herdmanstone, accompanied with only two menservants. The uncle received them with a show of cordial friendship; but the guests whom they expected to meet they saw not; and they had been but a few minutes beneath his roof, when they found themselves prisoners, secured by gratings, bolts, and bars. On discovering the situation into which they had been entrapped, Marion wept aloud, and accused herself of being the unwitting author of her sister's captivity.

"Fear not," said Margaret. "Our uncle is a stern man, he is a man of blood; but there are as strong hands as his, that will be raised to deliver the sisters of Kimmerghame and Polwarth, when their captivity becomes known."

"But how will it be known?" asked Marion; "for who knows that we are here?"

"Let us trust in Him who is the orphan's father," replied her sister, "and leave all to his good providence."

"Amen!" said the other; but she sobbed bitterly as she spoke.

On the second day of their imprisonment, their uncle entered the apartment where they were confined.

"Weel, maidens," said he, sternly, "how like ye your abode at Herdmanstone? I have observed the slightfu een with which baith o' you have looked upon your uncle; and now that ye are in my power, ye shall repent the airs o' disdain that ye hae taken upon ye. It becomes nae the blood o' Polwarths to assume a superiority over the house o' Sinclair. So choose ye—there are twa cousins, who are not very auld, but they're growing; ye shall hae your choice to marry them, or the deepest dungeon in Herdmanstone shall be your doom. Your destiny is placed in your own hands—decide it as ye will; but remember that it is a Sinclair that never broke his word that wags the finger o' fate over your heads. Eight days—eight days, remember!" he repeated, and left them.

"Now you will despise me, Margaret," said Marion; "for my maiden ambition has led us into this trouble. Yet will I rather be an inmate in our uncle's dungeon than be the wife of the boy-husband he would assign me. Sister, will you not upbraid me?"

"Upbraid you!" said the calm and gentle Margaret; "stern as is our uncle, deadly as is his wrath, I fear him not. The other day you spoke to me jeeringly of Sir Patrick Hume—in the same strain I answered you respecting his brother George. Eight days will not pass until Sir Patrick misses me from Polwarth; and, powerful as my uncle may be, bold and desperate as he is, I know that one stone of Herdmanstone Castle will not be left standing upon another till we are freed."

"You have a brave heart, sister," said Marion; "but it

is small comfort to me, who must look upon myself as the author of this disaster. And how think ye that Sir Patrick or his brother George (if ye will speak of him) are to hear of our confinement? Wot ye not that they know not where we are; or, if they should know, they will not apprehend that evil could befall us in the house of our relative?"

"I believe, Marion," answered Margaret, "that within the eight days which our uncle has named, we shall either be at liberty, or have ceased to live. It is our lives that he seeks, not that we should be the wives of his sons. Rather than be so wed, I will die—so will you. But, if we should die, our deaths would not be unavenged. He would neither enjoy our estates, nor the triumph of his guilt. Ye have heard the names of Patrick and George Hume of Wedderburn spoken of as sounds of terror upon the Borders—their swords have avenged the injured, and released the captive. Marion, they will avenge our wrongs! Dear sister, be not afraid."

It was about daybreak on the fourth day after their imprisonment, that a musician, who played upon the union or Northumbrian pipe of those days, approached beneath the window of their apartment, and softly playing an air, accompanied it with his voice, as follows:—

"My heart is divided between them,
I dinna ken which I wad hae;
Right willing my heart I wad gie them—
But how can I gie it to twae?
There's Meggy, a fairer or better
I'm certain there couldna weel be;
Dumfounder'd the first time I met her,
What was sweet Marion to me!

"Yet Marion is gentle and bonny,
I liked her ere Meggy I saw,
And they say it is sinfu for on
Man upon earth to like twa.

My heart it is rugg'd and tormented,
I'd live wi' or die for them baith;
I've done what I've often repented,
To baith I have plighted my aith.

"And oft when I'm walkin wi' Meggy
I'll say, 'Dear Marion,' and start;
While fearfu she'll say, 'Weel, I ken ye
Hae ithers mair dear to your heart.'
Was ever a man sae confounded?
I dinna ken what will be dune;
Baith sides o' my bosom are wounded,
And they'll be the death o' me sune."

"Hark!" said Marion, as she listened to the strain of the minstrel; "it is the song of the Egyptian thief, Johnny Faa. Mind ye since he sang it beneath our window at Kimmerghame?"

"I remember it weel," replied Margaret; "but dinna call him thief, sister; for, be Johnny a king or no a king, he is one that King James is glad to lift his bonnet to; and I am sure that he means weel to us at present. Wheesht ye, Marion, and I will whisper to him a low chant over the window." And, in a low voice, she sung—

"O, saw ye my laddie comin, Johnny?
O, saw ye my laddie comin?
If ye've no seen him, tell him frae me,
That I'm a waefu woman.
We here are sisters twa, Johnny,
Confined within this tower;
And ilka time the sun gaes down
It points to our death-hour."

"I heard it rumoured, gentle maiden," said the gipsy, gazing eagerly towards the window from whence they looked, "that no good was intended ye in this place; and though it be not in the power o' Johnny Faa to bring to ye the assistance o' his own men, yet it strikes me there is *ane*, if no *twa*, maidens, that I could bring to your rescue, and

that wad make a clap o' thunder ring through the deepest cell in Herdmanstone."

"Thank ye, Johnny," replied Margaret; "ye're kind—ye're very kind; and if ye wad carry a bit scrap o' paper to Wedderburn Castle, greatly would ye aid a distressed damsel."

"I thank ye, my doo, for relying on the word and promise o' John, king and lord o' Little Egypt. Little do they ken me, and less is their knowledge o' our race, who think that we would look upon those who are wronged without seeing them righted. How I heard o' your imprisonment or the wrong intended ye, never fash your thumb; though a bird waffed it in my lugs wi' its wings, though it chirped it in them as it chirmed past me, it is aneugh that I ken o' your wrongs, and that I will assist ye. Trust me, maidens."

"I will trust ye," answered Margaret.

"Dinna trust him, sister," said Marion; "he may be some spy of our uncle's."

"Of being a spy," cried the other, "I dinna believe him capable. Stop, Johnny, or king, or whatever ye be," she added, "and I will throw ye a word or two, to carry to Sir Patrick Hume of Wedderburn."

She addressed to him a few words, and threw the paper which contained them into the hands of the gipsy.

"Bless ye for your confidence, my bonny lassie!" said Johnny Faa; "and before the sun gae down, Sir Patrick Hume shall ken that there is ane that likes him pining in a captive's prison, wi' nane but ane that his brother likes to bear her company."

The gipsy king was mounted on an active pony, and although it was without a saddle, and reined only by a hempen bridle, he dashed off with it, at the pace of a fleet racer, and directed his course toward the Lammermuirs.

It was not noon when he arrived at the Castle Wedderburn. The porter at the gate retreated in terror, as he be-

held him, for the name of the Faa king had become terrible on the Borders, and even the king had been glad to grant him terms on his own choosing. On being admitted to the presence of the knight—"What is it, ye vagrant loon," asked Sir Patrick, "that brings ye to venture within the roof o' honest men?"

"Honest!" said the gipsy—"ha! ha! ha! I daresay your honesty and mine are muckle about a par. Between us twa it is, tak who can. Ye hae the bit land, Sir Patrick, but ye havena a stronger or a more cunning hand, nor yet a sharper sword, than the lord o' Little Egypt. Therefore, speak at evens wi' me, lest ye rue it."

"And wherefore should I speak at evens," answered Hume, "with the like o' you, who are at best but the king o' gaberlunzie men?"

"The mischief light on ye!" said the gipsy; "ye have provoked me sair, and I have tholed wi' your slights and taunting; but try me not wi' another word, lest ye rue it, Sir Patrick Hume, and your brother rue it, and every Hume o' the house o' Wedderburn shall be brought to cry dool, for refusing to listen to the words o' Johnny Faa."

"And what wad ye say if ye had your will, ye braggart knave?" cried the knight.

"Merely," retorted the gipsy, "that there is a bonny lassie, ane wha is owre guid to be the bride o' sae uncivil an individual as yoursel, now lying in durance, wi' death or perpetual imprisonment before her, while ye havena the courage to lift your hand to her rescue."

"Of whom speak ye?" vociferated the Laird of Wedderburn.

"Who," rejoined the gipsy, slyly, "is nearest to your heart?—who nearest to your door? Have you seen her within these four days?"

"What!" exclaimed Sir Patrick, "speak ye of my Margaret?"

"Of whom does your heart tell you that I speak?" said Faa.

"It is then to her that ye allude?" cried Sir Patrick.

"Ay, it is to her," was the reply; "and what knight are ye that would remain here idly within your castle, while death threatens the maiden o' your love?"

"Pardon me, stranger," said Sir Patrick; "tell me where she is."

"Ye ask me to pardon ye now," answered the gipsy, proudly; "ye knew me before, when the insult was offered, ye know me still. It is not because ye bear a name powerful in arms, nor yet that I have heard of your deeds of war, that I come to you; but it is because of the maiden who loves you as the Mayfly does the summer sun. Margaret Sinclair and her sister are the prisoners of their uncle, Sir William Sinclair of Herdmanstone. He has looked with an eye of covetousness upon their estates—he longs to possess them; and, if they be not yielded to him, the life of the fair owners now in his power must pay the forfeit."

The knight clasped the hand of the gipsy. "Thank ye, thank ye," he cried; "I will reward ye for this act of kindness."

"You reward me!" shouted the gipsy king, disdainfully. "Think ye that, when the King of Little Egypt does an act of humanity or generosity, he is to be rewarded for it by a Scottish knight! Away with ye, man! I spurn your thanks! I am as far above them as the moon is above the glow-worm that glimmers on the ground—ay, as the sun above the fetid matter from which it draws life. Know, then, that Margaret Sinclair and her sister will die unless ye have courage to release them, and that before another Sabbath shine a holiday to you."

Wedderburn held his hand in thankfulness. "Forgive me, forgive me," he cried; "I have spoken unjustly to one that has a soul within him, and who has sympathised for

those in whom my happiness is bound up. Again, I say, forgive me."

"Ye are forgiven," said the Faa; "and, if assistance be needed in the hour of peril, ye shall find willing hands ready to help ye, though ye deserve it not."

So saying, the Faa beckoned his hand, and withdrew from the presence of Hume. Sir Patrick bore the tidings instantly to his brother; and, within two hours, a hundred of their retainers stood armed around Wedderburn Castle. "To Herdmanstone!" was the cry; "and the rescue of the lady-love of the Lord of Wedderburn!"

"Ay, and for Marion, the maid of Kimmerghame!" cried George, the brother of Sir Patrick; "and the Sinclairs shall wear stout bucklers and belts to boot, that this sword pierce not."

The party being marshalled, they took their way across the Lammermuirs with the brothers Sir Patrick and George Hume at their head. It was shortly after daybreak when they appeared before Herdmanstone Castle; and the Lady Margaret was the first to perceive their approach.

"Sister!" she cried; "see! see! aid is at hand—the banner of the Humes is waving over the fields of Herdmanstone."

"Ye dream, sister!" said Marion, starting from her couch.

"Nay, I dream not," retorted Margaret. "Arise; through the grey light I perceive the plume of Sir Patrick Hume, and the gay jacket which my sister wrought for his brother."

Marion sprang forward to the place where her sister stood; they thrust their hands from the window, to encourage their deliverers to the rescue, while Sir Patrick and his brother answered them back, crying, "We come! we come! The haughty and cruel Sinclair shall repent in blood."

The trumpets of the Humes sounded; and, as if prepared for the approaching conflict, within a few minutes, more than fifty retainers of Sir William Sinclair were in arms.

Ignorant of the number of their foes, they rushed forth to meet them, hand to hand, and sword to sword. Long the strife was desperate—it was even doubtful; but, at length, superiority of numbers, on the part of the Humes, prevailed; the retainers of Sir William were routed in all directions, and his castle was assailed, even to its threshold. "To the rescue of the fair maidens!" shouted the Humes. Independent of the immediate retainers of Sir William Sinclair, however, his neighbours came to his aid; and although they were at first as two to one, the conflict had not lasted long when the Humes became the weaker party. The battle raged keenly—swords were broken in the grasp of their owners—the strong war-horse kicked upon the ground, in the agony of death, indenting the earth with its hoofs as it died, leaving the impression of its agony—their wounded men grappled with, and reviled each other, as though they had been foreigners or aliens—spears were broken, and shields clanked against each other—while the war-shout and the dying groan mingled together. Victory seemed still to be doubtful; for, though the Humes fought bravely, and their leaders led them on as with the heroism of despair, yet every minute the numbers of their adversaries increased, while theirs, if the expression might be used, became fewer and more few.

Yet there were two spectators of the conflict who beheld it with feelings that may not, that cannot be described. Now, the one beheld the plume which she had adorned for her betrothed husband severed by the sword of an enemy; while the other saw the gay jerkin which she had weaved for hers tarnished with blood. They perceived also what we might term the ebbing and flowing of the deadly feud—the retreating and the driving back; and they were spectators also of the wounded, the dying, and the dead. They saw the party in whom their hopes were fixed gradually overpowered—they beheld them fall back beneath the swords

of their opponents, disputing inch by inch as they retired, and their hearts fell within them. When hope, fear, and anxiety were wrought to their highest point of endurance, and the party in whom their trust lay seemed to be vanquished, and were driven back, at that period, Johnny Faa, and a number of his followers, rushed to their succour.

"Hurrah!" exclaimed the wanderer, "for the braw lasses o' Polwarth and Kimmerghame! Fight, ye Humes! fight! There is a prize before ye worthy a clour on the crown, or even a stab through the brisket."

The approach of the Faa king turned the tide of victory, and his followers shouted, "The bonny lasses o' Polwarth and Kimmerghame shall be free!"

"For ever, ay, and a day after it," cried Sir William, "shall the man inherit a cow's mailing, and a cow to boot, upon the lands o' Herdmanstone, who this day brings me upon his sword the head o' ane o' the birkies o' Wedderburn."

Sir William, however, became a suppliant for mercy beneath the red sword of Patrick Hume; and his life being granted, the Sinclairs gave their arms into the hands of their opponents. The young brothers each rushed into the house, to the rescue of the captive damsels; and Margaret and Marion each fell upon the neck of the man she loved.

On arriving at Polwarth, they were met by the glad villagers, with whom the fair ladies joined hands, and they danced together in joy around a thorn-tree, upon the village green.

In a few weeks, each of the maidens gave her hand to her deliverer—Margaret to Sir Patrick, and Marion to his brother George. On their marriage-day, the gay dance at the thorn upon the green was resumed, and a festive crowd tripped joyously around it, blessing the bride of Polwarth and her fair sister, Marion of Kimmerghame; and the music to which they that day danced proceeded from the

pipes of King Johnny Faa, who, with half-a-dozen of his people, sat each with a pair of union pipes beneath his arm, and discoursing "most eloquent music," without "fee, favour, or reward," save that they were partakers of the good things which were that day plentifully circulated upon Polwarth Green.

In concluding this account of the co-heiresses of Polwarth and Kimmerghame, it is only necessary to add, that, from her union with Hume of Wedderburn, the fair Margaret became the progenitor of the future Earls of Marchmont.

THE FESTIVAL.

In most of the villages on the southern Border, and particularly in part of Northumberland, together with Norham and Islandshires, there are what are called annual feasts. In the manner in which they are now kept, they resemble the *Wakes* or *Revels* which are held in various parts of England. They were originally religious festivals, and are still commemorated upon the anniversary of the saint to which the church or religious house in the village, or with which it was connected, was in olden times dedicated. They have long ago lost their religious character, and joviality has assumed the place of seriousness. Nevertheless, although, for more than a century, these feasts have been attended with much boisterous merriment, there is still much connected with them that we respect and revere. They come, as it were, whispering the good, the godlike admonition of Scripture—"Let brotherly love continue." For in those days, brethren and the children of a family meet together from afar beneath a father's or a brother's roof—the grandsire and the grandson sit at the table together—and the words of the inspired royal bard, that it is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity, are exemplified. They are seasons of mutual forgiveness, and of the exchange of family love. They are also seasons for which many a parent's heart longs eagerly; and although they are what may be termed changeable feasts, they fall on days which they all know without the aid of an almanack; for there is no calendar so true as a father's or a mother's heart. They are days to which many a mother looks forward, as to the time when she shall press an absent son or

daughter to her bosom—when a father shall give them the right hand of welcome, and in the fulness of his joy press his teeth upon his lip to conceal his emotion, while a stranger tear steals out, and seeks a home upon his cheek. They are, in every house, days in which the "fatted calf" is killed; and each village or feast has its own particular dainty, according to the season. At one is the luscious grilse (on that occasion baked instead of boiled); at another, dishes of fruit; and at a third, the roast goose. But each feast has its particular viands, and of them the poorest make an effort to partake. They are not as the Christmas feast was of old, when the rich fed the poor and their dependants at their table, and regaled each with a "smack of the good black jack;" but they are days on which the very poorest strive to make a feast for themselves, and to see *their own* around their humble board.

We confess, however, that these feasts do not present sunny pictures exclusively; there are many who, as we have hinted, crown them with boisterous merriment. It was an ancient custom to elect, on the morning after the feast, a *Mayor*, or *Lord of the Festival*, whose word was law, and who was the sovereign dispenser of fun and frolic, and against whose command there was no appeal. The farce of "*The Mayor of Garret*" furnishes a correct example of this species of rustic revelry. We are not yet very old; but are old enough to remember the time when the mayor, or lord of the festivities referred to, was chosen in accordance with the words of Burns—

> "Wha first beside his chair shall fa',
> Let him be king among us a'!"

But it is long since the treatment of a master of the revels ceased even to be decent—we would say merciful. In most places he is no longer paraded as an absolute monarch upon the shoulders of his subjects, but as the slave of the multitude, of whom they delight to make pastime. The mayor

of the village feast, "has fallen from his high estate," of dictating imperious commands for his short hour of power; and now he is generally placed in the condition of the frog in the fable, and what may be sport to his tormentors, is well-nigh death to him.

The festival from which our present story takes its rise was held in Tweedmouth (the southern suburb of Berwick), nearly seventy years ago; and, according to custom, on Margaret's day, or the following Monday. For, although most of them are in some degree held upon the Sunday (a celebration which would "be more honoured in the breach than in the observance"), Monday may always be considered as the chief day of the feast. Now at that period there resided at Tweedmouth a Mrs Mordington, the widow of the commander of a coasting sloop, who had left her with two children, a son and daughter. The son, at the period our tale begins, was about one-and-twenty; his sister, two years younger. The son's name was George, and he was then a clerk in the office of a merchant in Gateshead. At the feast of St Margaret's, therefore—which is commemorated in Tweedmouth in July, when the sun is in the plenitude of its strength, and when the very birds, oppressed with its heat, leave the thin air and the upper branches, and, folding their wings, sit silently in the umbrageous shades, enjoying, well pleased, the coolness of their leafy shelter—George Mordington returned to Tweedside, to see his mother and his sister; yea, and there was another whom he longed not less eagerly to behold, and that was Marion Weatherly, a fair-headed maiden of nineteen, and the daughter of a master fisherman, who had the lease of some two hundred yards upon the Tweed, somewhere between where the Whitadder joins it and the bridge; but whether on the south or north side I cannot tell. As there may be thousands of the readers of these tales unacquainted with the nature of salmon fisheries, or of what is meant by having

been a master fisherman in those days, I shall simply state that Mr Weatherly had taken a lease of a particular spot on one side of the Tweed, and which was in length about two hundred yards, and on that space he had the right of casting out and dragging in his nets. He had this river-farm at a very small sum annually; though, within a mile from the spot where he held it, we have known a lesser portion of fishing right in the river let for nearly two thousand pounds sterling per annum; and that, too, when the wisdom of the present generation (perhaps I ought to put the generation in the past tense) almost threw a *dyke* across the mouth of the river, which built up what was called the *Meadow Haven*, and which haven was a gut in the rocks, by which the fish, coming in shoals from the north, entered the river; and this being built up by the *dyke* or *pier* aforesaid, after running their noses against a stone wall, instead of meeting with the *natural* entrance to the river which *nature* dictated to them to pursue, they were left, like a pack of fox-hounds that had been thrown off their scent, to seek the artificial entrance where they might find it, or for another river if they chose. Thus, the good old Tweed being half blocked up, fishing waters, in the present day, do not abound with the silver-mailed salmon, as they did in the days of Mr Weatherly. Besides, the river was then *fished*, not *harried!* It is not, therefore, wonderful that the father of Marion became a man of property.

Now, George Mordington and Marion Weatherly had known each other from childhood. I do not say that they had loved each other from that period; but they were at the same school together, and even before they left it, they were *equalled* to each other. This *equalling*, or, as it is sometimes called, *evening* to each other, by schoolmates or acquaintances, often goes far towards producing the wedded love of riper years. Many a match would never have been made, but for the schoolboy's or the comrade's jeer. Once

name young hearts in the same breath, and you draw a magic circle round them; and, however little they may be acquainted with each other, whoever of the two may break through that circle, strikes a passing pang into the bosom of the other. Pride feels wounded, if nothing else does; but there is a feeling deeper and more tender than pride that has been rudely touched. It does not last long; but it is keen while it lasts. I am perfectly aware that there are many who may say, "Pshaw! it is all nonsense; who cares anything about these things *now?*" No middle-aged person, I grant you. Individuals of such an age like some home truth —something that comes home to their business and their bosoms as they are; and when such a thing meets them they say, "Oh, it is very natural." Granted that *it* is natural, why should people of middle age, yea, or of grey hairs, forget that they were once young; and that what is now "stale, flat, and unprofitable" to them, is still the feelings of thousands—is still delightful to thousands—was once *their* feelings, and delightful to *them?* Though past the sunny heyday ourselves, we like not to hear either man or woman cry out, with the Preacher, "all is vanity!" For light is beautiful —so is the sun that sheds it forth. The fair earth, with its buds, its flowers, its leaves, its fruits, and its trees with their singing birds—they are all beautiful—exquisitely beautiful! No man can look upon the works of his Maker, without adoring, worshipping, and loving the Power that formed them. Oh, when we so look abroad upon the glorious creation that is above, beneath, and around us—when we see so much that is measureless, magnificent, and that steals forth in beauty as a bud opens, until its loveliness is revealed before the very soul; and, above all, when we think also of the kind hearts that share our sorrows and our joys, that watch over us and that throb for us, that mourn with us and rejoice with us, and that are one with us in all things —we are tempted to say that all is "not vanity," but that

man is the author of his own "vexation of spirit." Now George Mordington was one who loved all the works of nature for their loveliness. He saw nothing to which his young heart would respond, "it is vanity!" He loved the very worm that crawled—writhing and dying as it crawled—over his path, and pushed it gently with his foot upon its parent earth, that it might live. Was there nothing in the scenery of his birthplace that he should admire it? There was neither the sublimity of mountains to awe him into remembrance—the majesty of wooded hills (which there might be), nor lakes where echoes died in music; but there was the Tweed, the stream of his nativity, which rushes into the arms of the ocean, like a beautiful bride that has been cast off by her parent, and falls upon the neck of her lover without adornments; and there was the rich lands of the Merse and Islandshire, for ever spread out before him, with the everlasting ocean, its calms and its storms, its placid stillness and its terrible waves—forming together a scene such as he that has once looked upon can never forget. Through such scenes George Mordington recollected Marion Weatherly.

It has been mentioned that he was a clerk in Gateshead, and at the annual festival held in Tweedmouth, he went to visit his mother, his sister, and the fair Marion. I might—for I have often been a witness of such a scene—describe the joy of the doating mother as she beheld her son, in the youthful bloom of manhood, seated at her table. With delight sparkling in her eyes, she sat gazing on his face, until the tear of affection rose and bedimmed their radiance. On her left hand sat her son, and on her right her daughter, and her intended daughter, Marion Weatherly. Their dinner passed over in happiness—the mother smiled to look upon her children's joy; and when "a gentle tap came to the door," which the daughter best understood, and blushing, responded to it, George and Marion also arose, and they went into the fields together. They wandered to and fro in

a narrow pathway, the length of which was rather less than a mile, while on each side of them the ripening grain formed a *waving wall*, giving promise of an abundant harvest. They wandered backward and forward, hand locked in hand, until the sun was lost behind Hallidon, and the stars began to steal out through the grey twilight.

When they shook hands at parting—"Now, George," said Marion, "you have your acquaintances to see, but do not remain late with them; for my sake and your mother's, do not."

"Dear Marion," said he, "wherefore remind me of this? I know that I must meet my acquaintances to-night, all of whom are my old friends, many of them my school-fellows; I have promised to meet them—I have to leave for Newcastle to-morrow—and wherefore remind me that I should not remain late with them?"

"Oh!" she replied, "only that you will remember your character, George."

"Do not be interested about my character," said he; "I have hitherto supported it with credit to myself, and, I think, dear Marion, I may do also for the future."

He pressed his lips to hers, and, shaking her hand fervidly, they parted for the night; but before they parted, they had renewed their young vows, beneath an ash-tree, where they had sat down together (upon the footpath which is now known by the name of the "*Willow Back*"), and where he had carved their names four years before, and there he deepened the incision which recorded their initials; and, as Virgil somewhere hath it (though neither of them knew anything about Virgil), they vowed that, as the "bark expanded, their love would grow." This is a very common idea amongst love-engravers upon trees; but though a Mantuan swain might so write, a British peasant would frequently have cause to say, that, as the tree grew, and the bark expanded, so did his initials spread, and become vague,

and more vague, until fog grew over them; and upon the heart, as on the tree where he had first carved his name, there was no trace left.

But George Mordington parted with Marion, and went to a street called the Kiln Hill, in which there then was an inn, known by the name of "THE SALMON." In it all the associates of his youth were assembled; and when he entered they rose simultaneously, each offering his hand, and exclaiming, "Ah! George! my dear fellow, how are you?"

They sat long, and they drank deeply; and, while the song, the story, the jest, or the argument went round, they forgot how time and reason were flying together. It was usual for such companies not to break up until they had witnessed the election of the mayor. The heads of several of the party began to go round as well as the glass; and of this number was George Mordington. He was a youth of the most sober and temperate habits; and before he had drank off his third glass, he might have said, in the words of the song, "This is no me!" His very countenance was changed; his manner, which was, in general, backward and retiring, became bold and boisterous. Instead of his wonted silence, he was the chief orator of the company. He spoke of things of which he ought not to have spoken, and as glass succeeded glass, so did one act of folly succeed another. Some of the more sober of the company said, they "were sorry for poor Mordington—but his head could stand nothing; and," added they, "it is a pity, for he is an excellent fellow." This, however, was only the sentiment of a part of them; and as he began to exhibit fantastic tricks, and to declaim with violent gestures upon all subjects, some said that he would make an excellent *mayor*, and proposed that a cart should be procured. Against this proposal some of his acquaintances protested; but the idea pleased his own disordered fancy, and as the madness of intoxication increased,

he insisted that the bacchanalian honour should be conferred upon him.

"Well done, George!" cried the more thoughtless of the party; "he is the king of good fellows, every inch of him!"

So saying, they rushed into the street, bearing him upon their shoulders; and amidst the shouts and laughter of men and boys, he was placed in a cart, his face rubbed over with soot, his hair bedaubed with flour, and a broomstick was placed in his hand as his rod of office.

"Hurrah! George Mordington is mayor!" was the cry upon the streets; and followed by a noisy multitude, he was paraded round the village, and, in comformity with ancient custom, delivered a speech at every public-house and baker's door in the place.

Old and young leave their pillows, to "see the mayor," as they term it, and hasten to the door or window, to witness his procession as he is hurled along. There were many who, as they perceived him, expressed regret to see George Mordington in such a situation, and said it would break his mother's heart.

But, as they passed the door of Mr Weatherly, a sudden cry was heard. It was a woman's scream of agony, and as it burst forth, the maddened shout of the multitude was hushed. It struck upon the ear of George Mordington in the midst of his madness and degradation—it entered his heart. It was the cry of his betrothed Marion. He struck his hand upon his brow, and fell back in the cart as if an arrow had entered his breast. Her voice had startled him, as from a trance, into a consciousness of his shame and folly.

"He is dead!" cried the crowd—for he fell as if dead, and in a state of unconsciousness he was conveyed to his mother's house. The poor widow wept as she beheld her joy turned into shame; and as he opened his eyes and began to gaze vacantly around, his sister said unto him, but rather sorrowfully than reproachfully, "Brother! brother! who

could have thought that you would have been guilty of this?"

A groan of anguish was his only reply.

"Daughter," said his mother, "do not upbraid him; he will feel anguish enough for the shame he has brought upon himself and on us, without our reproaches."

He started to his feet as he heard her voice, he thrust his fingers in his hair, he gnashed his teeth together, and howling as one in a paroxysm of insanity, exclaimed—

"What have I done? I am lost—disgraced for ever!"

"No, my son! no!" said his mother; "you have acted foolishly, very foolishly; but in time it will be forgotten."

"Never! never!" he answered; "would that the earth would swallow me up! I am worse than a madman or a villain—I am ashamed of my existence!"

They endeavoured to soothe him; and for a few hours he forgot his shame in sleep—though not wholly, for his slumber was troubled, and in the midst of it he groaned, clenched his hands, and grated his teeth together. The remembrance of his folly was stronger than sleep. He awoke, and a sensation of horror awoke with him. The extravagance and the madness of which he had been guilty in the morning were at first only remembered as a disagreeable and confused dream, which he wished to chase from his thoughts, and was afraid to remember more vividly. But, as he saw the tears on the cheeks of his mother and his sister, as they sat weeping by his bedside, all the absurdities in which he had been an actor rushed painfully, if not distinctly, across his memory; and he covered his face with his hands, ashamed to look upon the light, or on his kindred's face. He was sick and fevered, and his throat was parched; yet the sense of shame lay on his heart so keenly, that he would not ask for a drop of water to cool his tongue. For five days he was confined to his bed; and the physician who had been called in to attend him dreaded an attack of brain

fever. It was ordered that he should be kept calm; but there was a troubled fire in his breast that burned and denied him rest. On the sixth day, he ventured to whisper something in his sister's ear regarding Marion.

"Poor Marion!" she replied; "though she forgives you, her father forbids her to speak to you again, and has sent her to the north of Scotland, that she may not have an opportunity of seeing you."

He sat in agony and in silence for a few moments, and rising and taking his hat, walked feebly towards the door. But, ere he had opened it, he turned back, and throwing himself upon his seat, cried—

"I am ashamed for the sunlight to fall upon my face, or for the eyes of any one that I know to look upon me."

When the sun had set, and night began to fall grey upon the river, he again rose, and went towards the house of Marion's father.

"What want ye?" said the old man, angrily, as he entered; "away, ye disgrace o' kith and kin, and dinna let the shamefu shadow o' sic a ne'er-do-weel darken my door! Away wi' ye! Dinna come here—and let ae telling be as good as a hundred—for daughter o' mine shall never speak to ye again!"

"You will not," said George, "deal with me so harshly, because I have been guilty of one act of folly. They have a steady foot who never make a slip; and, ashamed as I am of my conduct, it certainly has not been so disgraceful as never to be forgiven."

"I have told ye once, and I tell ye again," cried the old man, more wrathfully, "that my daughter shanna speak to ye while she breathes. I hope she has a spirit above it. It would be a fine story for folk to talk about, that she had married a blackguard that was mayor at Tweedmouth feast!"

"I deserve your censure," returned George; "but surely

there is nothing so heinous in what I have done as to merit the epithet you apply to me. I acknowledge and am ashamed of my folly; what can I do more? And I have also suffered for it."

"Ye acknowledge your folly!" exclaimed the fisherman; "pray, sir, how could ye deny it? I saw it—the whole toun saw it—my poor daughter was a witness o' it; and yet ye have the impudence to stand there before me and say ye acknowledge it! And muckle mends it makes to say ye are sorry for it! I suppose, sir, the very murderer is sorry for his crime, when he stands condemned before the judge; but his sorrow, I reckon, is but a poor reason why he should be pardoned. Away wi' ye, I say—ye shall find no admission here. At ony rate, I have taken good care to have my silly bairn out o' your reach, and that she may be out o' the way o' the disgrace and the scandal that ye have brought upon us."

So saying, the speaker rudely closed the door in the face of his visiter.

George Mordington returned to his mother's house, gliding silently, as a ghost is said to move; for his cheek burned lest any one should look upon his face. On the following day, he prepared to set out for Gateshead; but before he went he placed the following letter, addressed to Marion Weatherly, into the hands of his sister, and which she was to give to her on her return:—

"Marion,—I cannot now call you *my* Marion—I have disgraced you, I have dishonoured myself. Your advice, which I deemed unnecessary, was not only forgotten, but you know how it was insulted. I know you must despise me; and I blame you not—you have a right to do so. I have made myself contemptible in your eyes, but not more contemptible than my conduct has rendered me in my own. I blush to think of you, and your excellence renders my folly more despicable. Call it madness—call it what you will—for it was the infatuation, the frenzy, the insanity

of an hour. Yet, dear Marion, by all the hours and scenes of happiness that are gone, by all that we have known together, and that we might yet know, cast me not off for ever! Had I been familiar with the nightly debauch, my degradation would have been less, my conduct not so extravagant. Think of me as one degraded by folly, but not abandoned to it. I have sinned, and that deeply; but my repentance is as bitter as my crime was ridiculous. Its remembrance chokes me. *Forgive me, Marion.* I write the words, but I could not utter them, for I find that I could not stand in your presence, and support the weight of the debasement which presses upon me as a galling load. Your father has treated me cruelly—I would say that he has insulted me, if it were possible to insult one who has so insulted himself. The only apology I can, or should, offer for the part I have acted ought to be, and must be, found in my future conduct. It is on this ground only that I ask and hope for your forgiveness."

So ran his letter; and having delivered it to his sister, under the promise that it should be given to Marion immediately on her return, he left his mother's house, and took his journey towards Gateshead.

On arriving at the office of his employers, they looked upon him as though they knew him not, and he perceived that the place at the desk which he had formerly occupied was filled by another; for there the tale of his follies had already reached: so true is it that evil rideth upon wings which outstrip the wind. His late master sent one of the junior clerks to inform him that he had no farther occasion for his services. George stood as if a thunderbolt had smitten him; and he went forth disconsolate, and began to wander towards South Shields, while the thought haunted him what he should do, and to whom he should apply for assistance. He had ruined his character—he was without friends, almost without money, and he wandered in wretchedness, the martyr of his own folly. He thought of his mother, of his sister, and of the fair Marion, and wept; for he not only had drawn down misery upon his own head,

but he had made them miserable also. He took up his lodgings in a mean public-house by the side of the river, and went round the public offices in Newcastle and Shields, seeking for employment, but without success. In all of them he was known; in each, the tale of his indiscretion seemed to have been heard, for his entrance was greeted with a smile.

In a short time he began to be in want; and, like the prodigal, he would have "arisen and gone unto his father"—but he had no father's roof to receive him—no home, save the lowly habitation of his widowed mother—and he found himself left as an outcast on the earth. In his despair he applied to the captain of a vessel which was about to sail for America. During his father's lifetime, he had made some voyages with him, and obtained a knowledge of a seaman's duty. The skipper of the American trader, also, to whom he applied, having known him when a clerk in the merchant's office at Gateshead, agreed to take him on board, and give him, as he called it, a trial. George Mordington, accordingly, sailed for America, and several years passed, and his mother heard nothing concerning him. The letter which he had left with his sister for Marion had been delivered to her, and as she read it she wept, and her heart whispered forgiveness. But days, months, and years dragged their slow course along, and no one heard tidings of him. She began to feel that, although she had forgiven him, he had forgotten her. Her father said she "was weel quit o' the ne'er-do-weel—that he had always determined that he should not speak to her again, and he was glad that he had not attempted it."

But his poor mother mourned for him as a stricken dove that is robbed of its young; the tears fell upon her pillow at midnight, as she wept for her son, her only son, the child of her heart and hopes. Anxious and fruitless were her inquiries after him. As the mist of morning vanisheth, so

had he departed from her sight; and, like it, when the sun melteth it away, he was not.

Mrs Mordington had a brother who had been many years in India, and having returned to Britain, he took up his residence in Ayrshire. Being a widower, and without children, he sent for his sister and her daughter to reside with him. They remained as the inmates of his roof for more than ten years, and during that period she heard nothing of her lost son. But her brother, who was now an old man, died, leaving to her his property; and, regarding the place where her husband's bones lay as her home, she returned to Tweedmouth. There, however, she had not been long, when disease fell, as a withering blight, on the cheeks of her remaining child. Year followed year, and, as the leaves dropped from the trees, her daughter seemed ready to drop into the grave. Over her face consumption's fitful rainbow spread its beautiful but deadly streaks; and, though the widow now possessed affluence, she knew not happiness. Her son was not, and her fair daughter was withering before her, as a flower on which the cankerworm had fixed its teeth. Yet, long the maiden lingered, until her aged mother almost hoped that they would go down into the grave together.

Eighteen years had passed since the festival which had proved fatal to the early promise and the fond prospects of George Mordington. Margaret's day had again come round, and the neighbours of the widow, with their children and friends around them, held a holiday. A slow and unwieldy vehicle, which was then the only land conveyance between Berwick and London, stopped in the village. A sunburned stranger alighted from it, and as he left the coach, a young maiden crossed his path. She seemed to be seventeen or eighteen years of age, and was dressed in a mourning-gown, with a white sarcenet hood over her head, being in the dress of one who was inviting guests to a funeral.

"Maiden," said the stranger, accosting her, "can you inform me where Mrs Mordington resides?"

"Yes, sir," she replied; "I am bidding for the funeral.

"For what funeral?" he exclaimed, eagerly.

"For her daughter's, sir," answered the maiden.

"My sister—my poor sister!" cried the stranger, clasping his hands together.

"Your sister!" said she, inquiringly gazing in his face, and throwing back her hood as she spoke.

"Heaven!" he exclaimed, and starting back; "your name, maiden—your name!" But he added, "I need not ask it; it is written on your features. Your mother's name is Marion?"

"It is," replied the astonished and half-terrified girl.

"Show me to my mother's!" he cried, smiting his hand suddenly on his bosom. "Would that I had this day to be buried in the grave prepared for my sister!"

Afraid to cast upon him another glance, she conducted him to the house.

"It is here, sir," said she, pointing to the house.

His frame, his features were convulsed; they shook with agitation. He raised his hand and struck upon the door. It was opened by a woman dressed in the garb of mourning, and whose years might be described as being between youth and middle-age.

"Do I dream!" he exclaimed, starting back as he beheld her. "I am punished!—yes, I am now punished beyond the measure of my crime! Marion, I am George Mordington!"

She clasped her hands together, a wild shriek escaped her lips, and she fell back as dead upon the floor. Others who sat with the corpse ran to her assistance; but his voice had reached an ear where its tones had lived as a memory that might never die.

"My son! my son!" cried the aged widow, and pressed forward to throw her arms around his neck.

"My mother!" he cried, springing from the ground, where he had sunk by the side of Marion.

The widow fell upon the breast of her son, and he wept aloud upon her neck.

Strangers raised Marion and conveyed her from the house. She had long believed George Mordington, the object of her early affections, was with the dead; and under this conviction, and in obedience to her father's command, she had given her hand to another. The maiden whom the betrothed husband of her youth had met on alighting from the coach was her daughter, and the features of the girl then were as the mother's had been when they last parted.

George Mordington accompanied his sister's corpse, as chief mourner, to the grave. The friends of his boyhood had forgotten the tale of his folly; but its consequences gnawed with fiercer agony in his heart than when he was first ashamed to behold his own face in a glass because of it. On the following day, it was stated that Marion was not expected to live, and she requested to speak with him before she died. He approached her bedside—she stretched her hand towards him. "Forgive me, George!" she cried. "I knew not that you yet lived. I am the wife of one who has long deserted me; my heart has long been broken, and your appearance has severed the last cord that linked me with existence. But I leave behind me a daughter. When I am gone, there will be no parent to provide for her—no father whose roof will shelter or hand defend her. As you once loved me, protect my poor child!"

"I will! I will!" he exclaimed. "Farewell, Marion!" And he rushed from the house.

She lingered for a few weeks, and he followed her to the grave, as he had done his sister. Yet the remembrance of his early shame still haunted him, and he imagined that

every eye in the place of his birth looked on him with derision. He gave his mother's furniture in presents to her neighbours; and, with her and the daughter of Marion, proceeded to London. The widow lived for a few years, and, at her death, he bequeathed upon the daughter of his adoption all that his mother possessed.

"Maiden," he said, "I cannot look upon thy face, but it reminds me of the happiness I have lost, of the misery I have brought on myself and upon others. Child of my Marion, farewell! I leave you, if not rich, above want. Be virtuous, as your mother was." And again crying, "Farewell!" he left her; and George Mordington was no more heard of by any who had known him. But, after the lapse of many years, there appeared in an American newspaper the following paragraph:—

"Died, at Washington, in the seventieth year of his age, George Mordington, Esq., a native of Berwick-upon-Tweed, a patriotic senator, and an upright judge.'

A LEGEND OF HOLYROOD.

ONCE upon a time, when a good story had not ceased to have a beginning in this way, there lived a person called William Glenday, who was a sort of sub-equerry to Mary Queen of Scots; or rather he assumed that title, because it sounded better than "head groom." This man was a widower, and lived with his daughter Mary, a very interesting young maiden, of about twenty years of age, in one of the houses within the precincts of the Abbey set apart for the Queen's household. William was a quaint Scotsman, shrewd and caustic in his remarks, like many of his nation. He was reputed rich, and somewhat addicted to making more than a proper display of his riches; in other words, he was "purse-proud." He was, however, a most loyal subject of the queen, whom he held to be a paragon of beauty. His daughter bore the same name; and it was even whispered that he had sought to trace a likeness between Mary Glenday and Mary Queen of Scots. What will the partiality of a father's love not accomplish?

On the other side of the Abbey strand—that is, on the unprivileged side—there was a house kept as a tavern or alehouse by a person of the name of Peter Connal, very well known in those days as a place of resort for the humble retainers about the palace. Instead of placing a dry picture of a type of his trade over his door, in the shape of stoups or bickers overflowing with his famous beverage, Peter conceived that he would be nearer his purpose of letting the public know the nature of his calling, by showing them the liquor itself, in a real quaigh, and in the act of being swallowed by a real toper; at least Peter gave out as a reason

for his sitting on a barrel at his door during a great part of the day, drinking his ale, that he was merely showing the public a good example, and exercising the functions of his calling in such a manner as to fill his purse and his stomach at the same time—a reason which possessed so much of plausibility, that his wife, Janet Wilkinson, was not, by the mere power of logic alone, able to show any fallacy attached to it. Peter had a son named John—a very fine young man, who followed his father's trade, but demurred somewhat as to the propriety of imitating his father, when he should come to succeed him, in making himself a living signboard; a piece of self-willed precocious conceit on the part of the lad which Peter despised.

Nor did Peter Connal stand in any want of individuals to approve of these sentiments. Among others who collected at this door, and took their station on the seat on which he sat, were William Glenday, and an Italian called Giulio Massetto, a servant in the employ of the famous David Rizzio. These three were often seen sitting together at the door of the tavern, drinking Peter's ale, and discussing any point of interest which the strange proceedings of the palace at that time offered to their curiosity. Peter did not approve of the intimacy which existed between Rizzio and the queen; Giulio defended his master; and William stood up for the unfortunate Mary.

"I canna see what our royal mistress can mean," said Peter, "by a' this walkin, and ridin, and talkin, and singin, and playin on psalters and sackbuts, and pipes and whistles, wi' that Italian. It's nae farther gane than yesterday, that my son John—wha despises his ain drink, fule that he is—saw the queen and him sittin in the bonny green bower, at the corner o' the King's Orchard yonder, skirlin ane o' their Italian sangs, like twa mavises. Is that like a Queen o' Scotland and the wife o' Darnley? Na! na!"

"Cattivo!" ejaculated the choleric Italian, "thy son doth

lie in his throat. My noble master is the only accomplished gentleman in this barbarous land; and my royal mistress hath made him her secretary, because thy kilted barons can only write with their swords."

"And maybe thae kilted barons may write wi' that guidly pen the word '*death*' on yer noble master's silken sash," answered Peter. "By my troth, lad, ye had better be at Cremona, playing an Italian strathspey, than here in our abbey, if ony o' our kilted barons be within hearin."

"Wheesht! wheesht! baith o' ye," said William Glenday; "ye are baith wrang. It may be ill for Giulio to speak in this fashion; but it may be waur for you, Peter, wha's living comes frae the palace, if ye are heard speakin ill o' Rizzio and the queen."

"I just say what I think," said Peter, pertinaciously. "That Italian piper would be better dangling at the black wuddy up the way yonder, than at oor queen's tail." And he quietly quaffed off a jug of his ale.

On hearing these words, Giulio could no longer restrain himself. He started from his seat, and shaking his fist in the face of Peter, turned on his heel and disappeared.

This scene, though made a little ominous by the fierce expression of the Italian's face and manner, was not long remembered. Peter continued to drink his ale, and did not hesitate to speak his mind on a subject which had, apparently, become of more than ordinary interest to him. The intimacy between him and William Glenday continued; and their children, as will appear, had good reasons that it should not be interrupted.

Now John Connal and Mary Glenday were of nearly the same age, and their sentiments accorded as closely as their years. From their earliest childhood they had associated together; and the feelings which were generated in the games and amusements of schoolmates, ripened, as they grew up, into sentiments of the heart. When the same blue-bell, which

divided their affections at the "Wells o' Weary," was cast away, it was only to give place to another object of mutual sympathy. The natural elements of love, thus reinforced by early congenial habits, mutual enjoyments, and the daily intercourse of an inseparable connection, produced, in a short time, a strong attachment in the youthful pair, which had been pledged and re-pledged as often as their fears suggested any impediment to their ultimate union.

These lovers had now arrived at an age when they might have been united; and they looked forward to this happy consummation with confidence and delight. John Connal, however, did not want rivals, who sued in vain for the hand of Mary. Among these was Giulio Massetto, the Italian, who had for some time solicited the favour of the maiden. He trusted much to his superior appearance and polished manners, and looked with contempt on the poor Scot who dared to dispute with him the hand of his love. Mary was much annoyed by the Italian's importunate method of wooing; partaking more, she thought, of the impassioned character of a madman's ravings, than of the quiet, rational, and sincere mode of a Scottish courtship. She had repeatedly told him that his suit was in vain; but every repulse seemed only to increase his assiduity, and add to the pathos of his protestations and serenades.

This man had earned for himself, since he came to Scotland, a reputation for every wickedness. He had been concerned in many disgraceful amours, and violent and bloody quarrels with the inhabitants of Edinburgh, which brought upon him a hatred equal to that which his master, by his imprudent conduct with the queen, had produced against himself. It was, in consequence, suspected that his passion for Mary was a mere ebullition of that kind of love for which his countrymen were then and are to this day remarkable; and that, even if he were so fortunate as to secure the object of his desires on condition of resigning his liberty, he would,

when his passion cooled, leave her to follow some other equally faithless and disgraceful amour.

Having been unsuccessful in every effort he had made with Mary, Giulio at last resolved to make an application to her father; and he trusted that the show of wealth which, by the misplaced kindness of the royal favourite, he was enabled to make, might have the effect of tempting William Glenday to endeavour to influence the affections of his daughter.

"Thou knowest, William Glenday," said the Italian, one morning, "that I love thy daughter Mary with the force of affection which a true and ardent lover ought to bear towards the devoted of his heart; and I have taken every method known in our country to induce her to forego the gratification of the infliction of her cruelty on her lover; yet she continues obdurate and determined that I shall die the victim of a passion which I cannot control. Yet, if she would but relent, how happy could I make her! My jewels amount in value to a hundred merks; and my master, on our marriage, will present me with a hundred more. Wilt thou aid me in my suit, and endeavour to persuade thy daughter that she ought to yield to the influence of my love?"

William Glenday, who was himself a little purse-proud and conceited, was by no means taken on the right side by this high-flown speech, which was, like all Giulio's conversation and manners, a gross imitation of the style of his master. William was adverse to his suit on many grounds; but the rhodomontade of this address, and the attempt to bribe him by a display of ill-gotten wealth, roused him beyond his natural bearing.

"Ye seem, sir, to hae yersel stated aneugh," answered William. "Ye admit that my dochter winna hae ye; and wharfore should I endeavour to force her luve? Besides, ye're no o' our country, man; and the lasses o' Scotland

dinna like foreigners. Tak an Italian! tak an Italian! Birds o' a feather gree best thegither; and the kite and the doo winna assort ava. I carena a bodle for your merks. If they were in their richt place, they should maybe be in our ain Scotch exchequer. Neither care I sae muckle as an auld sang for yer fine speech, which nea doot comes, like yer merks, frae yer maister. Ye needna, therefore, pursue ony mair this fruitless wark—which, it would seem, ye continue by nicht in the shape o' something they ca' serenades—or, as we would say, nicht-waits—as weel as in the licht o' day, by a constant use o' thae black een o' yours, aneugh o' themsels to terrify ony young leddy. In addition to a' this, John Connal has lang been my dochter's lover; and if they wish to mak a match o't, it shanna be me that 'll prevent it."

This calm and self-sufficient oration produced on the fiery and impatient temper of Giulio that rage which burned on the application of every spark. It must be confessed that even a Scotchman would have resented the hints of William, rendered more provoking by the manner in which they were uttered—a wink or a smile being always at hand to give piquancy to an innendo; while an imperturbable, calm, and self-confident assurance gave the whole an aspect of dictation, mixed with contempt. Giulio rose suddenly, and without so much as uttering a word, went away.

In the meantime, the two lovers had got matters in considerable advancement for their marriage, which was fixed to take place in the following month. The inhabitants of the Abbey were promised a grand entertainment in William Glenday's house; and the day was looked forward to by all and sundry as a kind of holiday. There was, indeed, something in the match of more than an ordinary character; for, as a pair of twigs which have fallen connected from a tree into a stream seldom find their way together to the ocean, it seldom happens that the loves of childhood can with-

stand the severing impulses of the conflicting and distracting interests of a selfish and calculating world. It was even whispered that one of the maids of honour of the queen intended to grace and dignify the union by being present at the ceremony. The preparations went on with spirit. The day approached, and everything seemed to conspire to add to the happiness of a union apparently under the influence of smiling and auspicious powers.

On the evening of the day preceding that on which their marriage was to take place, one of those events occurred which arrest the attention of thousands. Peter Connal, when coming out of the house of William Glenday, was stabbed to the heart. A number of persons immediately collected on hearing his cries—the guard of the palace was roused, and search made in every direction for the perpetrator of so bloody and unaccountable an act. Amongst those who rushed out when the cry was heard, was Mary Glenday and John Connal. The latter was entirely occupied in getting his father's body carried home, in the hope of his being only wounded, and with a view to get medical aid. Mary and some neighbours remained upon the spot, searching about for any trace, by footsteps or otherwise, which might lead to the discovery of the murderer. When engaged in this search, her eye fell upon a small sword lying at a little distance from the spot where the crime was committed. Upon taking it up, she discovered, to her astonishment, that it was her father's sword, which she had not missed from the house. She instantly secreted it under her clothes, and looked about to see if she could discover her parent. He had not, however, been seen during the tumult; and, though many inquiries were made for him, no person could tell where he was. She now flew to the house, and, upon getting into the inner chamber, applied water to the instrument to wash off the blood, threw the washings into a place where they could not be seen, and,

by means of ashes from the fire, scoured the instrument, so as to bring back its brightness. Having hung it up in the spot which it usually occupied, she turned to leave the room, with a view to go again to the street, to avoid any suspicion which her absence might suggest as to where she had been. As she turned, she started on observing the eyes of some person fixed on her through the window. She trembled from head to foot; and, unable to proceed a step, fell back into a chair which stood near her, and again shook with an apprehension which she could not account for. All these acts which she had performed during the last ten minutes, appeared to her as wanting the reality of life. She had done them intuitively; and as no proper, well-defined motive had been present to her mind during the time she was occupied, she was now equally at a loss to account for an apprehension which it was impossible there could be the least ground for. She questioned herself why did she secrete the sword—run home with it—wash it and scour it? Was she afraid of her father being charged as the murderer? Impossible! She was not afraid of that. She could defy the world even to suspect that her father was guilty of such a crime; and the idea of it was so absurd that it could not be entertained for a moment. Yet, was she not in fact alarmed? This was not to be denied. She tried to run over the acts which she had, as in a dream, performed by the impulse of a power external to herself; but, on looking to the window again, she saw the same eyes staring in at her.

At this moment the door opened, and a person came from John Connal to inform her that Peter was dead, and requesting to know if her father had yet been seen. She was unable to speak to the messenger, who went away without an answer. Mary continued to sit waiting with breathless impatience for the return of her parent. She heard the bustle in the street gradually die away. Occasional inquiries were made by the passengers for William Glenday, from whom

they wished to get some explanation of the extraordinary case; but the servant answered them, and stated that he was not come back, and Mary was indisposed. Eleven o'clock came, and still no word of her father. She heard some people on the street going home, remarking it as strange that William Glenday should be absent, when the father of his daughter's intended husband had been stabbed dead at his door.

About half-past eleven, William Glenday returned home. He was met by several people, who told him what had happened. He said he had been conveying a hound to a gentleman who lived in Leith, and that he had been detained beyond his usual time. He seemed to be very much affected by the death; and the more so, he said, that he and Peter had that day had some words about his daughter's tocher, which had very nearly broken off the match. He inquired particularly if any clue had been found to the murderer; and being informed that no trace had yet been got, returned home.

He found Mary sitting in the state already noticed, and attributed her apparent sorrow to the circumstance which had occurred. She looked up, and asked him where he had been when such awful doings had been going on at his own door. He answered her in the same way he had done the neighbours. She then asked him if he had been over at Peter's house. He said that he had not, but would go immediately. On turning to go out, she observed that his coat was all wet; and, on examining it more narrowly, discovered that it was wet with blood. At the sight of this extraordinary coincidence with the circumstances attending the finding of the sword, she screamed and fainted. Her father, alarmed for his daughter, hung over her with every demonstration of affection; but, attributing her illness and the faint to the shock produced by the death of Peter Connal, he trusted to her speedy recovery when the

nervous excitment under which she laboured had abated.

On recovering herself, Mary looked round her, endeavouring to recollect some painful idea which she knew had been the cause of her illness. The moment the thought again struck her, she started up, as if she had found there was a necessity for something being done. Calming her speech and manner, by an effort she made for that purpose, she desired her father to take off his coat, which was wet, and put on another, for the purpose of going over to Peter Connal's house. William complied, remarking (without examining the marks of blood which were behind) that Marion Gray—a woman of irregular habits, who lived in the precincts of the Abbey, and was well known at that time by the name of Mary's Marion, in consequence of having, in her better days, received some attention from the queen—had, as he passed her door, thrown a basin of water upon him, and instantly disappeared.

William Glenday having gone over to Peter Connal's house, Mary, who had said nothing to him of the blood, shut the window-shutters, and washed the coat. The basin in which the bloody water was contained was standing on the table; and, just as she was about to lift it, she saw that the window-shutters had been gently opened, and the face of some person was there gazing in upon her. This apparition again disconcerted the poor girl, and threw her into fits of trembling; but she got the water emptied out, and hung up the coat to dry upon a screen at the fire.

When her father returned, Mary asked him how Peter's wife was sustaining her affliction. She did not ask if any clue had been got to the murderer. She trembled as the words were on her lips. The circumstances of the evening bore heavy upon her. She knew that William and Peter had quarrelled about the tocher, but still she did not suspect her father. She felt it even impious to say to herself

that she did not suspect him; for she conceived that the mere connection of the ideas of the murder and of her parent could be nothing but a freak of the devil. Yet she could not ask her father if any clue had been got to the murderer, and she could not tell why she felt unable to do that. William talked about certain probabilities as to this one or that one being the guilty person, but came to no very satisfactory conclusion. His first idea, he said, was, that the Italian had done the deed; but he could see no proper motive that could induce him to commit the crime; and, besides, Giulio had been seen running out of the palace along with the rest of the people—no sword had been seen upon him, and none had been found by the persons who had gone to search for evidence. After indulging in some conversation of the same kind, and lamenting the death, and the consequent interference with the marriage, they retired to rest.

The search for the murderer of Peter Connal was continued for many days without effect. The funeral of the unfortunate man was attended by a great crowd of people, attracted by the respect in which Peter was held, and the unusual circumstances of his death. John Connal now took up the business, carrying his resolution into effect, not to imitate his father in the matter of the sign-post. He accordingly got a very imposing one erected, in which he fell into the error which his father had condemned in such indignant terms; for it was filled up with mere pictures of casks, bottles, and bickers—things in themselves so sacred in the estimation of Peter, that he hated all representation of them as a species of idolatry. The very barrel on which he had so often sat was turned in. The jaunty and gaudy signboard was not received as a compensation for the comfortable personalty of Peter. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood, who had formerly been so delighted with his portly figure, in the very attitude of doing almost

continually that which it was their wish to imitate, turned away their eyes from the dry contrast afforded by a mere picture, and sighed over all the vanities of this fleeting world.

The intercourse between William Glenday and John Connal was not interrupted by the unaccountable circumstance that had occurred; but it was soon observed that Mary was not what she used to be. Even John Connal observed a difference in her manner. She felt a reluctance to fix another day for the marriage; and the importunities of John seemed only to increase it.

"Now, my dear Mary," said John, "when our grief for my faither is, by the course o' nature, somewhat moderated, may we no accomplish that which was interrupted by that melancholy catastrophe? Twenty summers hae gane owre our heads, and fifteen o' thae hae been cheered by the beating o' our twa hearts, as by the sangs o' birds on a sunny day. The licht o' yer lauchin ee has been my only solace amang mony waes; and even on the occasion which has filled our houses wi' sackcloth, and our hearts wi' grief, and dashed frae our uplifted hands the cups o' pleasure which hae been a promise and a covenant between us for a fourth part o' the ordinary term o' man's pilgrimage on earth, I hae had nae staff o' support but ye, and nae beam o' hope but what ye hae pleased to vouchsafe to me. It canna be, then, that this misfortune, which, God knows, was nane o' my doing, should be turned frae the purpose which it was by Heaven intended to serve—nae doot to check our joy, which was owre bricht for mortals, into a total extinguisher o' a' our pleasures, and a final end to a' our hopes! Na, na, Mary, ye canna think that Providence will deal wi' us in that gate. And oh, tell me, dearest, for the sake o' heaven, why ye hae been sae changed to me o' late, and why ye winna again prepare to gang wi' me to the altar?"

"It's no for me," said Mary, "to interfere wi' the ways o' God—wha, having allowed us, in his high pleasure, to be joined in our hearts for sae lang a time—even our hail lives—thocht proper to part us in the end by sic an awfu token as the death o' yer faither, on the very day afore our marriage. There was a sign and a meaning in that token which my heart has read in tears, and interpreted in agony; and sae lang as it pleases Heaven to conceal frae us the hand which struck the fatal blow at yer faither's life and our hopes, sae lang, my heart whispers, maun our union be delayed!"

"That may be for ever, Mary," said the young man.

"No," answered she. "But when that time shall come—and oh, that it may come sune! for it will be as the dew o' heaven to the parched and gaping earth—when the bloody hand shall be stretched forth, and the guilty ane made to stand out in the searching sun o' a bright evidence—then shall I be able to say whether it may again be that there is any chance for our being united in the bonds o' matrimony. Till that time shall come, never mention to me the subject o' this conversation."

"Oh Mary, Mary, take back thae terrible words!" said he.

"No; my heart is filled wi' a grief which nane on earth can lessen; and it is a sad change that has come owre me, when I can hae a sorrow which ye canna ken, and though ye kenned it, couldna relieve. Yet sae it is: yer puir Mary is nae langer what she was, and may never be what she was again. The flowers o' Arthur's Seat hae lost their colours and their scents—the bluebells o' the Hunter's Bog ring nae mair peals—and the water o' St Anthony's spring is drumly and dark, as it is when the spirit o' the storms sits on the tap o' the 'Lion's Head.' 'Waly, waly,' is now my sang, the joys o' a bricht morning hae fa'en to the bottom, like the lees o' a vessel o' wine; and I maun drink

thae lees, bitter as they may be; for Heaven has said the word, and Mary Glenday is obedient to its behests."

The high-toned determination of the maiden satisfied John that it would be vain to press a suit at present, which was so clearly interdicted by some hidden circumstance. What that could be was a subject of intense interest and curiosity; but, though he thought of it daily and nightly, he could not even approach the mysterious reason which could change a human being so entirely, as to make a light-laughing maiden, high in the hope of being married, a sorrowful and sentimental woman, giving grave injunctions that her intended nuptials should not be broached in her presence. At times John thought that her mind was tinged with a superstitious melancholy, arising from some presentiment that, as their marriage was interrupted in such an awful manner, Heaven had set its decree against it. This opinion deserved weight, from the circumstance that the condition attached by Mary to their union still taking place was the discovery of the author of the murder; but even that condition was itself qualified, as if it depended upon the nature of that discovery whether she would consent to become a wife. The whole matter appeared a mystery, and John could make nothing of it.

The people in the Abbey discovered that Mary Glenday was entirely changed. Her cheek became blanched, and her blue eyes dim; while her general appearance was that of a person labouring under a consumption. She was seldom seen going out, except to church; and even there she never looked up. Many questions were put to her, as to the cause of her dejection, but no satisfactory answers could be got from her. Towards her father, her kindness continued. It was indeed a kindness altogether overdone—the result of a wish to heap attentions on him, as if from a morbid fear that he would not long be preserved to receive or she to impart them. William Glenday was extremely pained by

the change which had taken place on his daughter. He could not go out without producing terror in her mind. She was even at times seen following him; and, when he would turn round and perceive her, she would, as if caught and ashamed, slip out of his sight. If any person knocked at the door, she trembled; and if a question was put to her, as to where her father was, her answer was so confused, that very often the inquirer was obliged to go away without the information sought. If any one approached the place where the sword hung, she betrayed uneasiness; and, on one occasion, one of the grooms under her father having taken down the sword to look at it, she fainted. She never allowed her father to wear the coat he had on that night when the murder was committed; and, when he asked for it, she said she could not find it, although it was carefully secreted in one of her drawers.

This state of mind in the unhappy girl was not unknown to Giulio Massetto. He observed her changed appearance, and was well pleased to hear that there was at present no great likelihood of a union between her and John Connal. He was observed often to be watching about the door of the house; and his bold and blustering manner towards John, and his readiness to speak in his presence about Mary, betrayed a kind of triumph, mixed with a hope that he might yet succeed where his most ardent wishes still pointed. He had the boldness, indeed, one day to make up to her, as she came from church; but she shrank away from him, and left him in conversation with her father, who still kept on friendly terms with him.

William Glenday took every method of dispelling his daughter's melancholy. He proposed, one afternoon, a walk to Duddingston, which she reluctantly agreed to. They set off accordingly, and visited an acquaintance who resided there. After they had been there for some time, a messenger, on horseback, and holding another horse,

saddled and bridled, in his hand, inquired at the door if William Glenday was within. Mary heard the question, and, having seen the messenger and the horses from the window, rushed out, and cried that her father was not within. Her manner betrayed the utmost agitation. She endeavoured to prevent the servant from stating that William Glenday was in the house; and it was not until her father, who heard the noise, came out, that the messenger could know what was the truth. The people of the house could not account for her conduct on any other principle than that she was deranged. The messenger bore a request that William Glenday should instantly repair to the palace; and having committed Mary to the charge of his friends, he departed.

Mary returned home in the evening. The weather was calm and delightful, and the sun was setting in that fine amber-coloured radiance, which, in Scotland, is often so remarkable on an autumn evening. Wearied by her day's fatigues, she sat down to rest herself. A train of images rose in her mind, which took away all perception of time, or of the increasing shades of evening that gradually closed over her. In the midst of her reverie, she was suddenly startled by a human voice. It was that of Giulio Massetto.

"Anima mia!" cried the Italian, when he saw her. "Mary Glenday here, on the brow of the hill, in the gloom of approaching night! Io Godo! Io Godo! I am well pleased. And now we shall, if it please thee, have some conversation on a subject which, notwithstanding thy coldness, still lies next my heart. Thou knowest how I love thee, my sweet Mary; and I am well pleased to know that thou hast discarded thy old lover, Connal, who was not, indeed, worthy of the love of such a maiden. Thy father I shall yet appease and persuade, if thou wilt but answer to my love." And he held out his hands to embrace her.

"Stand back, sir," said the indignant Mary. "The power does not exist on this earth that can e'er mak Mary Glen-

day love Giulio Massetto; and Heaven winna interfere in sic an affair. I hae tauld ye aften—and this, I hope, will be the last time—that it is waur than useless to persevere in a suit which I can ne'er gie ony favour or countenance to. Ye may perceive, sir, that I am very far frae being in a guid state o' bodily health; the bloom has gane frae my cheek, and sorrow has flung her gloomy mantle owre the heart whar joy loved ance to dwell. Ye may, if it be yer pleasure, continue to persecute ane wha ne'er wranged ye—ye may shake doun the few lingering grains that remain in the sand-glass o' my life, and hasten the end o' a miserable existence. Ye may do a' this, sir; and when ye hae dune it, what will ye hae accomplished? When ye see the green turf lying on the grave ye hae helped to dig, will that be ony cause o' pride, or exultation, or thanksgiving? If it will, or if it can, then I truly say that the heart o' an Italian is no like that o' a Scotsman. Let me gang, sir, or I will wauken the spirit o' this place wi' the cries o' a determined and desperate woman."

"I cry thee mercy, maiden," replied Giulio, perfectly unmoved, except by hurt pride and bitterness. "I'osservo something troubles thee, and thou makest that a reason for rejecting my love; but what wouldst thou say if Giulio Massetto, whom thou despisest so much, could tell thee of the cause of thy illness. It is sometimes more easy to take the grief from the heart of an unwilling maiden, than to wash the gore from a sword, or from a garment which has been drenched in the heart's blood of a friend."

These words operated like lightning on the unhappy Mary. She intuitively fell on her knees, clasped the Italian's legs, clinging to them with the grasp of death—struggled for breath and power to speak, and convulsively screamed, "Tak—tak back thae words, and tell me that ye never uttered them—say that ye didna see me wash the sword, and scoor it, and hang it up i' my faither's room—say that I didna

wash the bluid frae my faither's coat, and dry it at the fire —say that, and—and—Mary Glenday will——"

"What?" said the cold-blooded Italian; "wilt thou become my wife?" These words recalled Mary's wandering senses, but only to consign them to the power of exhausted nature. She fell senseless at the feet of her perfidious persecutor. Approaching footsteps were at this instant heard, which caused the Italian to retreat; and, when Mary recovered, she found herself in the arms of her father, who led her slowly home.

When examined by her father, Mary pretended that some unknown person had surprised her on the hill. Her father stated that he thought he perceived Giulio Massetto part from her when he came up. To this she gave no very distinct answer, pretending that she was not very sure whether it was Giulio or not. This was not at all satisfactory to her father, because he was aware that she had fainted in consequence of the violence of the person who had suddenly left her on his approach; and if Giulio had been the individual, she could not have failed to know him. He felt unwilling, however, to press his daughter farther, because she seemed quite incapable of supporting any lengthened conversation on this subject, which seemed to be one of great pain to her.

The weight upon the mind of Mary increased; for she was now overcome by a feeling of total dependence upon the will of another. The depression of spirits produced by this accession to her disquietude acted with increased force on her frame, which daily became more attenuated. It was observed that she now ceased entirely from speaking of Giulio Massetto with disrespect or anger. When his name was mentioned, she was spell-bound and silent. One night a noise was heard at the window, as if some person had tapped at it in a peculiar and concerted way. William Glenday looked at his daughter, and asked what it was; she replied it was rats, and that she had heard the sound

often. In a short interval, however, she arose from her seat, and signified to her father that she had occasion to leave the house for a few minutes. The latter asked her whither she intended to go, adding, that, in her present weak state, she had better remain in the house. She replied, she was just going to visit a neighbour; and her father not having suspected any connection between the sound at the window and the departure of his daughter, offered no further opposition to her expressed wish.

It was about ten o'clock when Mary went out; eleven struck, and she was no yet come home. William Glenday became alarmed, and sent to inquire if she was in the neighbour's house she had mentioned. The servant came back, and informed him that she had not called there for many months. This increased her father's alarm, and he ran immediately over to the house of John Connal, to inquire if she was there. John said that he had not seen her for some days; but his affection for her suggested stronger dread than that felt even by her father; and seizing his hat, he rushed out of the house to search for the object nearest to his heart. On going round the King's Park, he thought he observed two people standing in the shadow of a house at the corner of the clump of trees, called at that time the "King's Orchard." On coming nearer, he heard the voice of Giulio Massetto, and then that of Mary Glenday. He was struck with intense agony. Could it be that he was now, in his turn, the unsuccessful rival of the Italian? Everything indicated that fact; and his fancy, fired by jealousy, now saw distinctly the reason why Mary would not consent to name another day for their marriage. Her statements about the murder of his father were used as a device to get quit of her obligation and pledge to him, and leave her at liberty to wed his rival. Her bad health was produced by the intensity of a new passion, and the struggle between conscience and inclination. Her distress, on being

surprised by her father on the night of their visit to Duddingston, was all affectation; for, as her father himself had stated, she had been in the company of the Italian, and wished to conceal it.

Stung to the heart by this supposed baseness on the part of his lover, John went forward, determined that either he or Giulio should die on the spot. Before he came up, however, the pair separated—the Italian going one way, and Mary another. John followed Mary, and overtook her.

"Is that you, Mary Glenday?" he cried. "What are ye doing here at this time o' nicht?"

"O John, dinna ask me what I'm doing here," answered Mary; "but let me get hame, where I hae mair need to be than in this place at sic an untimous hour."

"Why are ye here, then, Mary?" said John, with asperity.

"Because I have need to be here," answered she. "And if ye love me, dinna, for heaven's sake, ask me ony mair aboot it."

"Had Giulio, the Italian, need to be here too?" asked John, significantly.

"I winna answer that question, John," answered Mary, "nor ony ither ye may put to me. I can only say, that, if ye wish to add to the misery o' ane wha loves ye wi' a' the force o' a breakin heart—wha is worn down to the weakness o' a silly thread, by what she canna reveal to mortal—ye hae it in yer power noo to snap it asunder, and send yer ain Mary to sleep wi' yer murdered faither, in the Canongate kirkyard. Speak but ane or twa mair o' thae sharp words ye hae noo spoken, and ye will hae nae mair to do. I hae only to beg, that if ye love me, ye will say naething o' what ye hae seen or heard this nicht. The chough and the craw are gane to their rest—gae awa to yours; and, as they were heedless o' what was said and heard by me as I stood yonder under their sheltering tree, be ye equally heed-

less and equally mute. Nae mair. The life o' Mary Glenday depends on yer discretion!"

As she said these words, she beckoned to John not to go with her. She went in the direction of home; and he, with a heavy heart, stung with jealousy—and yet satisfied by her extraordinary conduct that there was something unexplained, feeling himself bound to conceal his emotions and obey her commands—went home also.

In the morning, William Glenday called at John's house, to inquire if he had seen Mary on the previous night. She had been, he said, late in returning—her spirits were getting worse, her health fast declining, and everything indicated some mental disease, or some secret of an extraordinary character, preying upon her mind. John denied having seen her, and gave a confused assent to what her father stated. This account did not agree with that given by Mary, who had said that she saw John Connal on the previous night. William Glenday became, in his turn, suspicious of John, and now began to think that he was acting dishonourably by his daughter—a circumstance that would, of itself, account for her state of health and spirits. He, however, said nothing, and departed.

Two nights afterwards, when William Glenday returned home about ten o'clock at night, he was told that Mary had gone out; and the servant said she thought there was some strange noise at the window before she departed. Her father was now satisfied that she had left the house to meet John, and resolved to go himself and ascertain the truth of his suspicions. He went and called at John's house; and having found that he had not yet come in, went away to the darkest parts of the neighbourhood, to see if he could discover whither they had gone. He had not proceeded far when he met two men carrying a female. This was his daughter, in a state of insensibility. She was supported by John and another person. They conveyed her to the house;

and having applied some stimulants, she recovered. William Glenday, with much asperity, blamed young Connal for not acting honourably towards his daughter, whose affections he said he was trampling on. The other defended himself as far as he could, without betraying Mary. He said he had met the stranger bearing her in his arms, and that he assisted him merely in carrying her homewards. The stranger, on his part, said he belonged to Leith, and that, as he went along by the entry from the south back of the Canongate to the Abbey, he saw the young woman standing with a man—that she was supplicating him not to do something which he threatened to do; whereupon he said, in a threatening and angry tone, that, unless she yielded to him within an hour, he would lodge an information the next day; and he swore that he would fulfil his threat. On his swearing, the young girl fell into a swoon; and her companion suddenly disappeared on seeing the narrator come up to her assistance. William Glenday could make nothing of this story, and Mary refused to say anything in explanation.

On the following day, two officers called at William Glenday's house, and showed him a warrant for his apprehension upon a charge for the murder of Peter Connal. Mary heard the statement of the men, and went again into a swoon. When she recovered, her father had been taken to prison.

A precognition was now led by the crown lawyers. Giulio Massetto was examined, and stated that, on the night of the murder, he saw Mary Glenday pick up a sword, which she found lying on the ground near the place where Peter Connal was slain; that he afterwards saw her, through the window, washing the blood from her father's sword and coat. Glenday's servant was next examined, who stated that she saw Mary washing the sword and her father's coat, by looking through the key-hole of the door. Mary was next called; but she refused to say anything against her father: and she

was not pressed. Several witnesses, however, were examined, who asserted that a quarrel took place between Peter Connal and William Glenday, on the day of the murder, respecting the amount of the tocher which Peter's son was to get from William Glenday with his daughter. This evidence the crown-officers conceived to be very strong, and nothing that the prisoner could say tended to affect it. The gentleman to whom, on the night that the murder was perpetrated, he said he conveyed the hound, was a Frenchman, then living at Leith, who wished to introduce a breed into France, for which country he had departed. He therefore could not prove an *alibi*. In addition to all this, the sword itself was produced, and a coat was found in Mary's cabinet, which presented all the appearances of having been washed. It was proved, too, that her father was never seen to wear that coat; and the groom referred to in a previous part of this narrative, said that Mary Glenday had nearly fainted one day when he took down the sword to look at it.

As the evidence gradually transpired and came to the ears of Mary, the effect produced upon her was of a character so intense, that no person thought she could support life under its influence. A series of swoons for many days seemed to divide her life with death. Her nerves suffered alternations of high excitement and the lowest depression; and, at times, her screams were heard far from the house, and by passengers going along the street. In quieter moments, she cried for Giulio Massetto, and said she would now consent to his conditions. The people around her conceived she was raving, and paid no attention to her wild request; though they could not restrain their tears, when they thought of the extraordinary fate of the unfortunate girl. Her early and romantic love for John Connal—the interruption of her marriage by the death of her intended father-in-law—her sufferings under the terror, very far from being causeless, that her father would expiate on the scaffold the

crime of murdering her lover's parent;—these things became topics of ordinary conversation, and brought tears to the eyes of many; but no one on earth knew all the sufferings of Mary Glenday. Her restless nights—her frightful dreams—her cold shivering fears, real and imaginary—her dependence on the word of a villain for the life of a parent—the conduct she was obliged to pursue towards her lover, for whom her affection had not diminished—and the nervous state of body into which she had fallen, formed a load of misery which would have bowed the head of an ordinary mortal to the grave.

Nor was the poor maiden now far from that place of rest. No extenuating evidence could be procured for her father, and the trial was fixed to take place within a fortnight. Every day of this period brought her more near to the termination of a mortal's career. She gradually sank to the last stage of life. The medical gentleman who attended her saw that she could not survive the period of the trial. John Connal was continually by her bedside. He had forgotten and forgiven all; though he had not got a proper explanation of her mysterious conduct. A faint glimmering of light, however, found its way into his mind; but any hope produced by it was in a moment clouded by the dreadful thought, that she had all along suspected her father to be the murderer of his parent, and had even taken means to conceal it, if she did not, by washing the sword and her father's coat, absolutely approve of it. When these thoughts came across young Connal's mind, he flew from the object of his love, beating his breast in agony; but pity again recalled him; and between so many conflicting passions, he was next to being a madman.

One night he had been sitting with her to a late hour. She was too far reduced to enter into anything like conversation—a few words being all that ever passed; and these were of the most ominous character. After a long pause,

and when she seemed to be occupied with thoughts of her approaching death, she started up in an instant, and laid hold of John, who was sitting by her bedside. "Ken ye Mary Gray, John?" she cried, with a wild scream—"ken ye that woman that is ca'ed Mary's Marion?"

"I do," answered John; "what aboot her, my dear Mary?"

"Awa to her!" she cried—"awa to her! wi' the flicht o' light. A thocht has come into my head—why has it been sae lang o' comin? Ask her if she threw ony bluid on my faither's coat on that awfu nicht when yer faither was murdered?"

With the effort produced by speaking these words, she fell back exhausted. John went in search of Mary Gray. She was not in the house; but a young girl told him that she had met her with a man in the Hunter's Bog. He hurried away to that lonely place. It was now dark, but the night was quiet; and, though he could not see far, he could hear with the greatest distinctness. About the middle of the glen, he heard two persons engaged in conversation.

"For the twa gowd pieces ye gied to me," said a woman, "for assistin ye in the matter o' fat Peter's death, I dinna thank ye, Giulio, because I wrocht for it! Hang ye for an Italian dog! do ye think that Scotch lasses are sae blate as to forget their bargains! Na, na—I hae got naething frae ye for this last fortnicht, and I'm this nicht in want—so gie me the silver pieces ye are awin me."

"It is neither gold nor silver that insolence will get out of an Italian, Mary Gray," said Giulio. "It is another metal that he gives—at least to a male."

"And did puir Peter Connal," answered she, "gie ye ony insolence when ye slew him sae unmercifully wi' Peter Glenday's sword, that ye got me to steal for ye frae his house, as if ye hadna had ane o' yer ain."

"Yes," answered the Italian. "He was insolent to me when he abused my master, calling him an Italian piper, and saying he should be hanged for his services to our gracious queen."

"And wherefore did ye put the crime on William Glenday," asked Mary, "by using his sword, and getting me to throw bluid on the puir man's coat when he passed my hoose?"

"Because," said Giulio, "he was also insolent to me. He refused me his daughter—taunted me about my money, my speech, and my country. Besides, I wished to stop his daughter's marriage with John Connal, which the suspicion attaching to him could not fail to do. I was, besides, freed from any suspicion of doing the deed myself. Other circumstances arose from chance, favourable to me; for I did not count upon Mary's secreting the sword, and washing her father's coat, which thou knowest has com out in evidence against her."

"And it is a strange thing, Giulio," said she, "seeing that yer life is in my hands, that ye should treat me as ye are noo doin, denyin me the silver piece sae justly due to me. Are ye no feared I gang up the street yonder, to the council chaumer, and mak a contract atween you and the black knave wha hugs his freends sae closely aboot the craig?"

"Thy life would answer for it," said Giulio, sternly.

"And what would Mary's Marion," answered she, "care for a spark, whilk only noo throws oot a glimmer to show her her shame?"

"Thou jokest, I presume," answered Giulio.

"I will tell ye that," answered Mary, "when I get my silver piece. Tempt nae mair the wrath o' an angry woman, wha has only to say the word that will mak yer feet dance i' the air, to a tune o' your ain whistling. It winna be Davie Rizzio that will save ye if Mary says the word."

The Italian struck the woman violently, who fell,

uttering a loud scream. As John Connal rushed forward, Giulio fled, pursued by the threats and imprecations of Mary, who, upon returning, was grateful to John for delivering her from his violence.

Next day Mary Gray was examined by the procurator-fiscal. She gave a detailed account of Giulio's having bribed her to steal William Glenday's sword; and afterwards, when he had killed Peter Connal, to throw blood on Glenday's coat as he passed her door. John Connal gave next his account of the conversation he had heard between the Italian and Mary Gray. Other witnesses were examined to prove Giulio's quarrel with Peter, and also with William Glenday; and one man stated, that when Giulio joined the people who were rushing out of the palace to see the fray, he seemed to approach them at an angle, as if he had not come direct from the palace. In addition to all this, Mary Glenday, who was examined in bed, gave a satisfactory account of her actings, as they have been already detailed.

The aspect of matters was now changed. William Glenday was liberated, and the Italian put in his place. He was afterwards tried, condemned, and hanged. Mary Glenday recovered, and explained everything to the satisfaction of her lover to whom she was afterwards married.

THE RESTORED SON.

On the banks of the Esk, in the County of Dumfries, stood, some years since, a handsome, substantial-looking mansion, bearing all the marks of plenty and comfort; while the neat and elegant arrangement of the grounds around bore evidence to the refined and chaste taste of its proprietor, Gavin Douglas. He was a gentleman by birth, and, "if merit gave titles, he might be a lord," for a more kind-hearted, amiable Christian never existed. He had succeeded to his father's property nearly thirty years before the time of which we write, and had constantly resided upon it ever since, growing daily in the love and respect of all who knew him. His appearance and address were particularly prepossessing: he was tall and upright in his person; his manners were bland and gentleman-like; and his fine expanded forehead and mild expressive eye told of a warm and benevolent heart. He was a widower; and his family were at a distance—the sons in the pursuit of their respective professions, and the daughters all happily and comfortably married, with the exception of the eldest, who resided under his roof with her three fatherless children. His eldest son, Edward, had been for some years settled in a mercantile house in Calcutta, where he had lately married, and had been admitted as one of the partners of the firm. Gavin Douglas well supplied the place of a father to his little grandchildren; his whole aim seemed to be, to study *their* happiness, and to soothe the sorrow of their bereaved parent.

One summer evening, the family party at Eskhall were seated in their comfortable drawing-room, engaged in that cheerful, affectionate conversation which forms the peculiar

charm of a well-educated, well-regulated family circle. The day had been one of the most sultry and oppressive of the season; but the clouds, which gathered round the setting sun in dark and gloomy masses, seemed as if waiting in sullen silence for his disappearance, to pour their fury upon the scenes to which his rays had given beauty. Nor did they threaten in vain; all the wrathful energies of nature seemed to have awakened at the very hour when man and beast were about to seek repose. The rain descended in torrents, and poured forth, more like a continued stream than a collection of single drops. The vivid forked lightning appeared, in its ragged and eccentric course, to tear asunder the veil of darkness, only to render it doubly visible, while, glancing ten thousand reflections from the falling rain-drops, it flashed across the eyes of the family party, startling and dazzling them with its sudden and excessive brilliancy. The children clung to their grandfather in mute and breathless awe, and the whole party sat in silence, uninterrupted, save by involuntary ejaculations, which escaped them at each successive flash. Not a breath of wind was stirring, not a sound was to be heard, but the dull, monotonous, incessant pattering of the rain, and the loud, clear, crackling burst of the thunder, as it rolled peal after peal over their heads, and apparently in dangerous proximity. At length, the rain began to relax in its violence, the flashes of lightning became less and less vivid, and the thunder died away in faint and distant murmurings.

"Grandfather!" said little Gavin, leaving his stronghold between Douglas's knees, "was not that an awful storm?"

"Yes, my boy," replied the old man; "awful, indeed! and thankful ought we to be to the good Providence which has blessed us with a roof to shelter us, while many an uncovered head has been exposed to its violence. Such a night as this ought to awaken in us a spirit of gratitude for the

blessings we ourselves enjoy, and of charity towards the wants of others."

"Did you hear that strange noise during the storm, grandfather!" said little Emma; "it sounded like the bleating of a lamb close by; but I was so much frightened by the lightning at the time, that I did not mention it to you, and —— There it is again!"

A low, wailing, stifled kind of cry was heard, which almost immediately ceased, and the whole party started up, with looks of surprise and alarm, and gazed at each other, as if mutely inquiring from whence the strange sound could proceed. Again the cry was heard; and Mr Douglas, seizing one of the candles, rushed to the front-door, to ascertain the cause of their alarm. Great was his surprise to find, under the porch, a small wicker-basket, covered with a coarse, ragged shawl, on removing which, he started to behold the little chubby features of an infant, which stretched out its little arms, and crowed with delight at the sight of the candle. Mr Douglas's first impulse was to hurry into the parlour, where our little hero was safely deposited on a sofa, and exposed to the curious and inquiring gaze of the assembled party.

"O grandpapa!" shouted little Gavin, clapping his hands, and dancing round the baby, "I have often heard you say, 'It is an ill wind that blows nobody good;' and now see what a nice little brother the thunderstorm has blown us."

"Inhuman wretches!" exclaimed Douglas, "to expose such a sweet infant in a night like this! But they cannot be far off." And, ringing the bell violently, he went out with some of the servants in pursuit of the supposed fugitives: but vain was their search; every nook and corner of the grounds were examined, but no traces of any such could be discovered; and Douglas returned, fatigued and disappointed, to the parlour. On examining the basket in which the child had been laid, a crumpled and dirty piece

of paper was discovered, on which was written, in a trembling and almost illegible hand, "Be kind to the boy—he comes of a good family. His name is Philip F. May Heaven prosper you as you behave to him!" There was likewise a signet ring, with a few Persian characters engraved upon it. The clothes in which the infant was dressed were formed of the best materials, neatly and plainly made, but bore evident tokens of neglect and dirt.

"Poor boy," muttered Gavin; "since your own unnatural father has deserted you, I will be a father to you. Here, Jane, my love," addressing his daughter, "I commit this stray lamb to your charge for the present; see that he is comfortably settled in the little crib in your room."

Years passed on; the little foundling had become a tall, handsome stripling of thirteen, as much beloved for his kind and amiable disposition, as he was admired for his handsome form and bold and manly spirit, when Gavin Douglas received a letter from his son Edward in Calcutta, informing him that by the next ship he intended to send his eldest daughter, who was now seven years old, home to his care. The ship by which this letter had been forwarded, having met with a succession of light and baffling winds, had made so long a passage, that the little stranger whose approach it announced might be now daily expected. At length the newspapers gave notice of the arrival off the Start of the ship Cornwallis; and Gavin Douglas prepared to hasten up to town to receive his granddaughter. Philip, who was at home for his school holidays, and who was now as dear to Douglas as if he had been his own flesh and blood, entreated and obtained permission to accompany him. Owing to a long continuance of easterly winds, the Cornwallis made a tedious passage up the Channel, and our travellers were detained for some days at Gravesend, awaiting her arrival. To Philip this delay was most welcome; the bustling scenes around him seemed to arouse the latent energies of his nature. Accustomed to

the quiet and peaceful monotony of a country life, he felt as if a new sphere of existence was opened to him; and everything he beheld bore, in his eyes, the stamp of novelty and excitement. His great delight was to loiter for hours at the stairs (Gravesend did not then boast of the handsome jetty which now adorns it), and to gaze at the numerous craft floating on the bosom of the majestic Thames; some lying at anchor, and others taking advantage of the tide to hasten towards their various destinations. Frank and open in his manner, eager and anxious in his thirst for information, the watermen, who were always lounging in numbers about the stairs, felt a pleasure in gratifying his curiosity, and in initiating him into all the mysteries of river seamanship; and he soon learned to distinguish the different "riggs" of the passing vessels, from the lowly "peter-boat" to the majestic ship. One morning there was a dead calm; the river was gliding past unruffled by the slightest air; the cheerful "Yo, heave oh!" of the sailors, and the loud clanking of the windlass "pauls," were heard distinctly from some of the distant colliers, shortening in cable, preparatory to making a start; while the rattling, clattering sounds of the chains were heard from others which were just "bringing up"—for it was high-water, and the upward-bound vessels were obliged to come to anchor. Philip had been at his usual post for some time, when his attention was attracted by the heavy, sluggish cloud of smoke which hung in the wake of two steamers, whose low painted chimneys were seen over the land, which they flitted past with great rapidity, while the tall, naked spars of a large ship towered far above them. At length their hulls became distinctly visible.

"Hand here the glass, Jem," said a waterman who was anxiously observing them, to his comrade; "let me have a squint at her. Ah, I'd swear to her among a thousand! That's the old Cornwallis! Jump into the boat, Jem, and let's push out into the stream."

Away flew our friend Philip to the inn, to tell his father, as he called him, the welcome news. The old gentleman hurried down to the stairs, and the Cornwallis had hardly let go her anchor in Gravesend Reach, before he and Philip were on her quarterdeck, inquiring for Catherine Douglas. Captain M'Dougall of the Cornwallis received them with the greatest politeness, and, upon Gavin Douglas informing him of the cause of his visit, he was immediately ushered into one of the round-house cabins, where a little dark-eyed girl was playing with her ayah.

"Catherine, my dear," said Captain M'Dougall, "here is your grandpapa come to visit you."

Little Catherine, as we said before, was seven years old, and, like most Indian children, quick and clever beyond her years. She was a brunette in complexion—so much so, indeed, that she might have been mistaken for a descendant from parentage of the climate in which she had been reared. Her eyes were dark, lively, and brilliant, and a profusion of rich black hair fell in clusters upon her shoulders. The moment she heard Captain M'Dougall's announcement, she dropped the toy with which she was playing, and ran eagerly up to Douglas:—

"Are you really grandpapa Gavin?"

"Yes, my love," said the old gentleman, almost smothering her with kisses.

"Are you quite sure?" said she: "then," looking smilingly up in his face, "I think I love you very much, grandpapa.'

Philip was now introduced, and, in five minutes' time the two young people were sworn friends. Catherine had shown Philip all her rich store of toys, and had answered all his eager questions about the voyage, the ship, the uses of various things in the cabin, &c. Be not impatient, gentle reader, at the details of this childish meeting; the happiness or misery of life often depends upon trifles light as air, and our friend Philip's future destiny took its hue from the

consequences of that intimacy of which we have just been describing the commencement. In the course of a fortnight, the travellers with their young charge returned to Eskhall, where the little stranger met with the most affectionate welcome. The banks of the Esk were beautiful as ever; but, to Philip's eyes, they had lost great part of their attraction; he had had a glimpse of the scenes of active life, and he was eager to engage in them. The country sports in which he used to take such delight began to lose their relish; and his principal amusement now was to wander in the green fields with little Catharine, and to listen to the tales she told of her recollections of the distant lands she had left. His curiosity was excited, and he burned with impatience to visit them, and to judge for himself; and he expressed to Gavin Douglas his predilection for a sailor's life, and his eager wish to commence his career as soon as circumstances would allow. Gavin's heart yearned towards the handsome and spirited boy, whose eye sparkled, and whose tongue became eloquent, as he urged his suit; and he felt that the time was come, which he had long looked forward to with pain, when this young and ardent spirit must leave his guardian care, and be intrusted to its own impulses. He talked seriously and affectionately to the boy on the subject of his wishes; told him—what had hitherto been kept a secret from him—the history of his first appearance at Eskhall; assured him that he always would be, as he hitherto had been, in the place of a father to him; and concluded with saying—"Reflect seriously upon what I have pointed out to you, my dear boy; I have laid before you, as far as my experience goes, all the advantages and disadvantages of the profession which you wish to adopt; weigh the matter carefully in your thoughts; and if, at the end of a week, you continue in the same mind, I will do all in my power to promote your wishes."

Poor Philip's astonishment and distress was unbounded,

when Gavin informed him of the mystery that hung over his birth. He had always hitherto been known by the name of Douglas, and had been accustomed to consider himself as Gavin's grandson; and the truth burst upon him with the astounding effect of a thunderbolt. Pale as ashes, with the tears streaming down his cheeks, he exclaimed—

"Not your grandson, sir? Then who am I? Good heavens! have I been living from my earliest years a poor dependant upon your bounty? O my generous benefactor! my more than father! how can I ever prove my gratitude to you for your unvaried affection and kindness?"

"You have already proved it, Philip, by repaying affection with affection; by your steady obedience, and constant attention to my slightest wish. I have a father's love for you, Philip; and, poor, and unknown, and alien as you are, you have made yourself as dear to me as if you were my own flesh and blood. I feared that this disclosure would fall like a blight upon your young spirit; but, painful as it is, it was necessary that it should be made. Cheer up, my boy! brighter days will come. I feel a conviction that the secret of your birth will be one day discovered, and that you will have no reason to blush for your parentage."

"Heaven grant it may be so, sir! but I dare not hope. If I had not been a cause of shame to my parents, would they have deserted me?"

Douglas shook his head, and said—

"Time will show. At all events, my dear Philip, look upon me as your father until you find a better."

"That can never be, my dear, dear gr——benefactor."

The week of reflection passed away; but not so Philip's resolution, which was now confirmed and strengthened by his eager desire to relieve Mr. Douglas from the burden of his support, and by the hope that he might by some fortunate chance be guided to the discovery of his true parents. On his making known his decision, Gavin Douglas imme-

diately wrote to a friend in town, through whose interest he obtained for him an appointment as midshipman on board an Indiaman which was on the point of sailing for Bengal and China, and which it was necessary for him to "join" immediately. Before he left Eskhall, Gavin delivered into his hands the ring and other articles that had been found in the basket in which he was exposed when an infant, that he might have some clue whereby to endeavour to trace out his parents. Delighted as Philip was at the prospect of entering upon his new profession, he felt the greatest sorrow at parting from his kind and liberal benefactor, and from those whom he had been so long accustomed to look upon as near and dear relations; but still more deeply was he affected at leaving his beloved little playmate, Catherine. *Her* grief on the occason was excessive. Philip had been her constant companion in all her little rambles, and her resource and comfort in all her childish difficulties and sorrows. He had scarcely ever left her side; and now she was to part with him—perhaps for ever! Poor Philip himself was obliged to exert all the pride of precocious manhood to resist the contagious example of her tears; but he did all in his power to comfort the little mourner, and at last partially succeeded, by reminding her that in a few months the voyage would be over.

"And *then*, dear Phil, will you come back again?"

"That I will."

"Oh, how glad I shall be to see you again!" And she jumped about, clapping her little hands for joy, till the recollection of the long separation that must intervene called forth a fresh torrent of tears.

At length the parting scene was over; and, freighted with the blessings and good wishes of all who knew him, Philip was fairly launched into the rough ocean of life, to be exposed to all its storms and quicksands, from which he had been hitherto safely sheltered in the calm haven of

domestic peace. The first voyage passed safely and happily; and some years flew by in the same routine of leave-takings and glad meetings. Philip loved his profession enthusiastically; but, at every successive parting, he felt more and more unwilling to tear himself from Eskhall and its beloved inmates. Catherine was now a lovely, elegant girl of eighteen; her childish preference for Philip had been gradually and imperceptibly gaining strength, till it had become the ruling passion of her heart. *He* loved *her* fondly and tenderly; but his fears were excited by her constantly-increasing reserve towards him; there was such apparent inconsistency between the attentive kindness of her actions, and the distance and almost coldness of her manner, that he was puzzled as well as surprised. But the eyes of Gavin Douglas's experience were open, and he had for some time read—in the changing complexion of Catherine whenever Philip approached her, in the embarrassment of her manner whenever she addressed him, and in the suppressed eagerness of her interest in whatever concerned him—that secret which she shrunk from confessing even to her own heart. Though he dreaded the consequence of an attachment which he thought might be productive of only misery and disappointment, yet he had too much confidence in Philip's honour and discretion to fear any clandestine avowal of love on his part. He wrote to his son Edward in Calcutta, informing him of his suspicions and fears as to the state of Catherine's affections—telling him all the particulars of Philip's history, and leaving it to his own judgment to act as he thought circumstances required.

"In the meantime," wrote he, "I cannot openly interfere, lest, by striving to remedy, I should only increase the evil; but I will endeavour, quietly and unobtrusively, to keep the young people apart until I hear your decision. My opinion is, that a final separation will be the only means of weaning them from each other. Catherine has a

father's home to receive her—when poor *Philip* leaves *me*, he leaves his only earthly protector; and, even for my granddaughter's sake, I cannot part with one whose amiable and affectionate dispositions have rendered him dear to me as a son."

The result of this communication was a letter to Catherine from her father, telling her that he was obliged to visit England for a few months, on business, and begging her to hold herself in readiness to accompany him on his return to Calcutta. Philip had just arrived from abroad when he received this news; and, as is often the case, it was not till he feared he was going to part with Catherine for ever, that he felt how deeply and fondly he loved her. He became restless and unhappy; and wandered away, day after day, alone, under pretence of seeking amusement in rural sports, but in reality for the sake of indulging the sorrow that was preying upon his mind. He shunned all society, even that of her whose image was ever present to him, and absented himself as much as he possibly could from the family meetings at meals. His dejection began to have an evident effect upon his health, and the kind-hearted Gavin grieved to see his young favourite pining under the influence of his hidden sorrow.

"Philip, my son," said he to him, one day, "why have you not confided in me, your oldest and dearest friend? I have penetrated your secret, Philip, and I honour you for endeavouring to confine it to your own bosom; but you must rouse all your energies to shake off the tyranny of a passion which your high sense of principle must tell you cannot safely be indulged in, and is only likely to be productive of sorrow and disappointment." He then proceeded to remind him delicately of the cloud that hung over his birth, of his want of means to maintain the woman of his choice in comfort, and of the absolute necessity for his strenuous exertions to rise in his profession, as the only

chance of bettering his condition in life; "for though," added the generous man, "it is my intention to make some provision for you in my will, yet there are so many claims of relationship upon me, that your proportion will, I fear, be but small."

Philip's heart swelled, and his eye glistened, as he pressed the old man's hand, in mute acknowledgment of his kindness; and some moments elapsed ere he could sufficiently command his feelings to give expression to them in words. At length, in broken and hurried accents, he expressed his heartfelt gratitude; he confessed that he had long loved Catherine, but said that he had never "told his love," hoping that his prospects might brighten, and that he might then be enabled to prove himself worthy of the happiness he sought. He acknowledged the justice and propriety of all Mr Douglas had said, and expressed his conviction that it was his duty, however painful it might be to his feelings, to tear himself from the society of one whose presence was so dangerous to his peace, and to endeavour, however vain that endeavour might be, for *her* sake as well as for his own, to conceal, though he could not stifle, the passion which reigned in his heart. It was agreed upon between the two friends that Philip should employ his time while on shore in travelling, till his ship was again ready for sea, and that he should then join her, without taking leave a second time of his friends, except by letter. Poor Philip could hardly command his feelings, when taking what he considered to be his final farewell of Catherine. He knew that, when he next returned home, Eskhall would have lost its principal charm in his eyes—that *she* would no longer be there, and that, in all human probability, they might never meet again. Catherine only felt, or appeared to feel, the uneasiness attending a temporary parting; but her voice trembled slightly as, with a pale but steady countenance, she bade him adieu; and, leaving the room, with a

calm though melancholy manner, she hurried to her chamber, and, securing the door, gave way to the sorrow which in his presence she had successfully endeavoured to restrain. Time passed slowly and heavily with Philip during a rambling tour which he made through different parts of England and Wales. He fought manfully against the sorrow that oppressed him, and endeavoured, by rapidity of motion, and constant variation of scene, to turn his thoughts into another channel; but in vain—the arrow was fixed too deeply in his heart. He hurried from place to place, and from change to change; but he could not fly from himself. In vain did nature present her varied beauties to his eyes; he gazed listlessly and vacantly upon all he beheld—he looked as though he saw not, for his heart was elsewhere, and he felt that for him the charm of existence was over. In the meantime, Catherine's father had arrived at Eskhall, and had been informed by Gavin Douglas of Philip's noble struggle with his unfortunately-placed passion, and of the anguish of mind which his resolution had cost him.

"Generous young man!" exclaimed Edward Douglas; "he deserves a happier fate. Would that I could favour his suit! But, poor, unknown, and perhaps basely born as he is, it is my duty as a father to oppose it."

Shortly before Philip's ship *came afloat*, Edward Douglas was obliged to go to London on business; and there he found out and introduced himself to our young friend. Few young men of his age possessed greater powers of pleasing than Philip; there was a frank ingenuousness in his manner and address which, seconded by the remarkable beauty of his features, immediately made a favourable impression upon a stranger—an impression which a further intimacy seldom failed to strengthen into affection and esteem. Such was the effect of his introduction to Edward Douglas. They were mutually pleased with each other, and every hour

that Philip could spare from professional duties was devoted to his new friend, rendered doubly dear to him by his near connection with her whose name he dared not mention, though ever in his thoughts.

"My dear fellow," said Douglas to him one day, "I am aware of the sacrifice you have made of feeling to principle, and I honour and esteem you for it. Would to heaven your circumstances and my own were different! Situated as you are, without the means of supporting even *yourself*, I think I know you too well already to imagine that you would willingly expose her you love to poverty and humiliation. Were my circumstances such as to enable me to enrich my daughter, and to follow the inclinations of my own heart, I know no one for whom I would more willingly use a father's influence than yourself."

Philip's heart was too full for words; yet, though he felt the hardship, he acknowledged the justice, of Edward Douglas's objections, and felt greatly affected by his kind expressions of friendly feeling towards him. They parted with mutual regret; Edward to return to Eskhall, and Philip to join his ship at Gravesend.

"Ah!" said Gavin Douglas, one morning, about a fortnight after the above parting, as the family were seated round the breakfast-table, "there is the post-bag. Bring it here, James" (to the servant). "It looks too thin to contain anything, I am afraid. Yes; here is a letter from dear Phil."

"When is he to return, grandfather?" asked Emma, now a full-grown woman.

Catherine was seized with a sudden curiosity to look at a pamphlet which lay upon the table, and which she held very close to her eyes.

"Return, my love!" said Gavin; "when his voyage is over, I hope. This letter was sent on shore by the pilot, and is dated 'Off Scilly.' But, mercy upon us! what is the matter with Catherine?"

The pamphlet had fallen from her hand; the cheek which had flushed to crimson at the mention of Philip's name was now of death-like paleness; and she was leaning back in her chair, with her eyes closed, and panting for breath.

"Thoughtless blockhead that I was!" muttered Gavin Douglas. And he then set himself to repair the mischief he had done, by bustling about to procure the necessary remedies, which at last succeeded in restoring Catherine to consciousness.

"It was a sudden spasm," said she; "I shall soon recover from it."

"Poor girl!" thought Gavin, "I fear not; the evil is more deeply rooted than I imagined."

From this period, Catherine became quite an altered character. A settled melancholy seemed to weigh upon her heart. She was mild, gentle, and affectionate as ever; but the buoyancy of her spirit was gone, and the smile, which now but seldom brightened her countenance, was evidently but grief in disguise. Her friends, with delicate consideration, avoided all allusion to the cause of her sorrow, which was but too well known to them all; and her fond and grieving father hoped that time and absence, and the novel scenes she was about to enter into, might work, imperceptibly to herself, a gradual cure.

Nearly nine months had elapsed since Philip's departure; Catherine, half broken-hearted, had accompanied her father on shipboard, and was far on her way to the East; and the Recovery, Philip's ship, was on her homeward voyage. One fine night in March, the Recovery was running along the Lagullas Bank, taking advantage of the current which sweeps round the Cape of Good Hope to the eastward. The wind was light but steady from the S.E., and the night cloudy, when the look-out man on the forecastle called out, "A light on the larboard bow, sir!" A small glimmering light was seen on the horizon to windward, which gradually

enlarged to a broad flame, wavering and flickering in the breeze; and almost immediately the dull sound of a gun came faintly moaning over the waters, and a long train of arrowy light went rushing up into the sky, where it hung for a moment, and then burst into separate flashes, which gradually died away as they descended. The officer of the deck ran in to the captain immediately. "I am afraid, sir, there is a ship on fire to windward. There is a strong light on our weather-beam, and I heard the report of a gun, and saw the flash of a rocket."

"Indeed! Tell the gunner to clear away one of the guns. Call the hands out. I will be out in a minute."

The light, in the meantime, was gradually increasing in size, and it was evident, from the wavering outline which it presented, that the first conjecture respecting its origin was a correct one; and gun after gun confirmed it. The captain speedily made his appearance on deck, and, after a moment's glance to windward, called to the chief mate, "Run the stunsails in, Mr Waring. Brace sharp up, and bring the ship to the wind. Are you all ready with that gun, Mr Wad?"

"All ready, sir!"

"Then, fire! Bear a hand, clear away another gun."

The Recovery was now hauled close to the wind, and was slipping rapidly through the water in the direction of the light; all hands were on deck, and, after the bustle of taking in and stowing the studdingsails had subsided, the eyes of all were directed with the greatest anxiety towards the horizon on the weather-bow, where the flame was now distinctly seen, sometimes barely visible above the water, and then bursting upward in broad and vivid jets, waving fitfully in the breeze. All at once it disappeared, and half suppressed murmurs and ejaculations burst from the excited crew of the Recovery.

"I fear we are too late, sir!" said Waring, the mate; "the light has disappeared."

"Very strange!" replied the captain, straining his eyes through the night-glass. "I hope not! Oh no! I see how it is. Don't you observe that the red fiery haze still hangs round the spot?—and, hark! there is another gun! She is on fire abaft, and is running down before the wind. She has heard our signals. Fire another gun!"

The vessel to windward still continued firing minute-guns, by the louder report of which it was evident she was rapidly approaching; and in a short time the dark mass of her canvas was distinctly visible, standing out in bold relief from its fiery background.

"Have the quarter cutters clear for lowering, Mr Waring," said the captain. "Away aloft there, topmen; send down whips for the yard tackles, and have the large cutter all clear for tossing out."

These orders were instantly and actively obeyed; the crew seemed to vie with each other in their exertions, and strained every nerve in their eager emulation. They could now clearly discern the dark hull of the ship, the sails forward hiding the body of the flame, broad masses of which were seen, with every roll she took, flaring out from each side, alternately, of the dark screen of canvas.

"Man the gear of the courses!—up courses!—in royals and topgallantsails!—back the mainyard!" were the orders which now rapidly succeeded each other; and, in a few moments, the Recovery lay as motionless as a log on the water.

"Call the hands—out boats!"

The large cutter was quickly hoisted out, the quarter-boats were lowered and manned, and kept alongside, in readiness to push off at a moment's warning. The burning ship was rapidly approaching, and was now within two miles of the Recovery.

"Fire a gun to windward, and burn a blue light," exclaimed the captain; "she is quite near enough."

The stranger now came slowly and gradually up to the wind, and hove to, with her maintopsail to the mast, about a mile ahead, and to windward of the Recovery.] An involuntary shout of horror and admiration burst from the crew of that ship, when the change in the position of the stranger revealed to them the terrific extent of her danger—of horror for the imminent peril of her crew, and of irrepressible admiration of the splendid scene so suddenly unveiled to them. Broad masses of flame were bursting apparently from her gun-room, and waving over her quarter; while thick clouds of smoke, glittering with sparks, shot upwards, and were borne far off to leeward by the breeze. Every rope in the ship was as distinctly traceable by the glare of the flame, as if it had been broad daylight. Her mainsail was hauled close up; and her crew, seeming to have been aware that their only chance of rescue was in flight, had been actively employed in keeping her headsails wet with streams of water from the fire-engine, for it was very evident that no earthly power could check the progress of the flames abaft.

The dark forms of the crew were seen hurrying about her decks, apparently employed in clearing away the boats, one of which soon pushed off from her, loaded till her gunwales were within a few inches of the water, and pulled slowly towards them.

"Shove off in the boats," shouted the captain of the Recovery, "and give way, my hearties, with a will.'

There was not a moment to lose; a spark caught the maintopsail; the canvas, as dry as tinder with the excessive heat, was in a blaze in a moment; and, with lightning-like rapidity, sail after sail on the mainmast caught fire, and blazing for a moment with a broad and brilliant glare, shrivelled up, and flew in burning tatters to leeward. It

was an awful sight, that pyramid of flame, rising as it were from the bosom of the deep. Not a sound was to be heard, but that of the rapidly-moving oars, and the rushing, moaning, and crackling sound of the flame. The men tugged at their oars in the silence of desperate energy; life and death depended upon their exertions, and their voices seemed to be hushed by the extremity of the danger. In the meantime, sail was made upon the Recovery, and the breeze having partially died away, she crawled slowly up on the weather-quarter of the stranger, and again hove to. Boat after boat soon joined her, and, having deposited their freight, hastened back to the scene of danger for more. The greater part of the crew of the burning ship were soon safely bestowed on board of the Recovery, when Philip, who had already made two trips to the stranger with the boat under his command, pulled towards her again, to bring off the remainder of her men. He was fast approaching her when he was hailed by the officer of one of the other boats, who told him that he had taken off the last of the crew. He was just on the point of returning to his ship, when he heard sounds of remonstrance and entreaty from another boat which was slowly approaching; the crew seemed undecided whether to proceed or return; and, at the same time, he observed by the light of the fire the officer of the boat struggling with a man in the stern-sheets, who was apparently endeavouring to jump overboard.

"It would be madness—downright madness to return," exclaimed the officer; "I will not risk the lives of my men —she will blow up immediately."

"Let me go!" shouted the stranger; "if I cannot save her, let me die with her." At this moment the stranger's eye caught sight of Philip, who was standing up in the boat, and, with a loud and startling cry, he shouted, "Philip, Philip, save her! Save Catherine!" It was Edward Douglas! At the same time a shrill scream came over the

water, and a female form was seen at the gangway, waving her hands over her head, and wringing them in all the anguish of despair. For a moment Philip was paralysed; it was but for a moment.

"We will save her or perish!" shouted he; "what say you, my lads?" The men answered him with a cheer, as the boat sprung through the water under the impulse of their bending oars; and a few vigorous strokes brought them alongside the blazing ship. It was but the work of a moment for Philip and one of the boat's crew to spring up the ship's side, and to lower the fainting Catherine into the arms of the men below. With careful haste she was laid down in the stern-sheets, and the water foamed beneath the bows of the boat as her gallant crew bent desperately to their oars. A handful of water sprinkled on Catherine's face revived her for a moment; she opened her eyes upon her deliverer, and, murmuring "Philip!" closed them again, with a shudder, and relapsed into unconsciousness. The moment the boat reached the Recovery, the ship's mainyard was filled, the lower tacks were hauled on board, the small sails set, and she stood to windward, to widen her distance. The precaution, however, was scarcely necessary, as the blazing wreck was drifting fast to leeward. Almost immediately after the boat had left her, she had paid off before the wind, the sails on the foremast caught fire, and in a very short time the blazing wreck of spars fell forward over the bows. All eyes were now eagerly directed towards her, to watch the finale of the catastrophe. They were not kept long in suspense: a dense cloud of smoke burst from her fore-hatchway, followed by a rush of bright flame, and a loud and deafening explosion, and then all was darkness—the hull had disappeared, and not a vestige of the unfortunate vessel remained, except the fragments of the wreck, which fell far and wide, pattering and hissing in the water.

It was with a feeling of breathless awe and silent thanks-

giving that the rescued crew gazed upon the scene; and many a cheek among them was blanched with shuddering horror at the thought of the miserable fate they had so providentially and narrowly escaped. The most daring and reckless among them were sobered for a time, and many a half-suppressed expression of thankfulness to an overruling Providence burst from lips to which oaths and curses had been but too familiar. As soon as all was over, sail was made upon the Recovery, the watch was called out, and arrangements were made for the accommodation of the unexpected addition to her crew. The name of the unfortunate ship was the Victory—a fine vessel of six hundred tons. The fire had been occasioned by the negligence of the steward, who, while unpacking a case of wine, had left a light burning in the after orlop, which had set fire to the loose straw, from which the flame was soon communicated to the spirit-room.

"All that men *could* do, we did," said the captain, when telling the story; "but, from the first, I had no hope of saving the ship, and slight was our chance of escape in the boats. When the sound of your gun reached us, it was as a messenger of hope—a promise of rescue; and three cheers burst from our crew, as we put our helm up, and stood away to join you. My men behaved nobly; with death staring them in the face, they never for a moment failed in their duty, or flinched from the danger, and exerted themselves to the utmost to keep the fire under, and to prevent its communicating to the sails. Thanks to a merciful Providence, and to you, its gallant agents, we have been rescued from a dreadful doom!"

In the meantime, our friend Philip had hastened to the cabin which had been appropriated to Edward Douglas, and, knocking at the door, was immediately admitted.

"Philip!" exclaimed Edward, grasping his hand, while the tears stood in his eyes, and his voice trembled with

emotion; "my dear, my gallant deliverer!—what an awful fate have you saved us from! If I had lost my child, how valueless would have been my own preservation! To you, under Heaven, I owe both: how can I express my gratitude?"

"Oh, speak not thus to me, dear sir; I but did my duty, and am I not already more than repaid? But how is Miss Douglas?"

"Miss Douglas!" said Edward; "cold and formal indeed! Why not Catherine?—your Catherine? Have you not earned a right to call her yours?"

Philip trembled, and turned pale; and then, when the warm blood, rushing to his cheeks again, flushed them with emotion, he exclaimed—

"Oh, Mr Douglas! My whole efforts, since we parted, have been to smother feelings and wishes which your words have again called into life."

"And long may they live, my dear Philip!—my dear son I hope soon to call you. I will no longer strive against fate. You have saved Catherine's life; and, if you still retain her love, you have a grateful father's full and free permission to avail yourself of it. For the rest, we will trust to Providence, and to the exertions of your own active and energetic spirit."

"Mr Douglas," said Philip, "your kindness overpowers me. I would risk a thousand lives, if I had them, for such a recompense; but I must not take advantage of your excited feelings to obtain a boon, however dear to me, which your prudence would deny. The same obstacles remain which at first existed. I am still poor and friendless; the obscurity of my birth has not been cleared up; and, circumstanced as I am at present, ought I to avail myself of an accidental advantage, and of your too generous appreciation of it, to fetter the free choice of your daughter, who probably may now see those obstacles with far different eyes than in her early days?"

"Better times may come, Philip; and, in the meanwhile, my daughter's dowery will be sufficient to afford you both all the comforts, though not the luxuries of life; your own energy and industry must do the rest. But you must consult Catherine on the subject—gain her consent; mine you have, without further condition, already."

After a consultation with his officers, the captain of the Recovery deemed it expedient to put into the Cape; and the ship's course was accordingly altered. The wind continuing fair and steady, on the evening of the fourth day from the disaster, she was close in with the coast; and the breeze dying away, and a thick fog coming on, she was hove to for the night. The next morning the fog still continued; nothing was to be seen of the land, though every eye was strained to penetrate the gloom, till at last the glad cry was heard from the mast-head, "High land ahead, sir! Close aboard of us!" All eyes were now turned upwards; and there, frowning above the bank of fog, appeared the dark outline of the Table-land. The fog soon cleared off; and, in an hour ar two, the ship rounded Green Point, and came to an anchor in Table Bay. After Edward Douglas and the rest of the passengers were landed at Cape Town, Philip, being second officer and *idler*, obtained leave of absence for a couple of days, and went on shore to join his friends. The boarding-houses were all crowded; for there were several ships in the roads, one of which, full of passengers from Bengal, had arrived the day after the Recovery; but Edward Douglas had contrived to secure accommodation for Philip in the same house with himself. Several passengers by the newly-arrived ship had taken up their quarters there; and among them a fine-looking, elderly man, a General Fortescue, of the Bengal army. This gentleman happened, on his first arrival, to be shown into the room where Philip and Edward Douglas were conversing together. They both rose at his entrance, and he returned the salutation of the latter

with the free and unembarrassed air of a man of the world; but, when he turned to Philip, he started, and gazed at him for some moments with a look so fixed and earnest as to call the colour into his cheek.

"Excuse me, sir," said he, at length—"excuse my involuntary rudeness. Your features awakened recollections of other times, and of long-lost and dearly-loved friends; and, for the moment, my thoughts wandered into forgetfulness of the courtesy due to a stranger."

"I hope at least, sir, that the recollections I recalled were not unpleasing ones?"

"When you have lived to my age, young sir, bitter experience will have taught you that the 'thread of life is woven of mingled yarn;' and that shades of sorrow and disappointment may darken the brightest pictures in memory's retrospect. Few, very few, can look back to the past years of life with unmingled pleasure, or forward to the future with unmixed hope."

Both Edward Douglas and Philip became greatly interested in this new acquaintance, especially the latter, who in turn seemed to be the object of the general's almost exclusive attention. He seemed to watch Philip's every movement with eager interest, often cast upon him earnest and inquiring looks, and would then, with a heavy sigh, withdraw his gaze, as if his features had recalled some faint and shadowy image of the past, which his memory was in vain endeavouring to realise. A party was formed to visit the far-famed farm of Constantia, on which the well-known choice wine of that name is manufactured; and the three friends set off together on horseback after breakfast next morning. General Fortescue, notwithstanding the habitual shade of melancholy which clouded his countenance, proved himself to be an animated and most agreeable companion. His mind was stored with varied knowledge, and his conversation was enlivened with anecdotes of events and characters

which had come under the personal observation of a keen and penetrating mind.

"I know not how it is, Mr Douglas," said he, "but I have not felt for years such a springiness of spirit as I experience to-day. I suppose it is because this beautiful country recalls to my recollection our own dear England. Suppose we dismount, and ramble for awhile among the trees; with our feet upon the soft grass, and under the cooling shade, our recollections of our distant home will return with greater warmth and freshness."

This proposal was gladly acceded to by his companions; and, having given their horses to the care of their attendant, they wandered about for some time, and at last finding a grassy spot sheltered from the rays of the sun, they seated themselves, and entered into an animated and cheerful conversation.

"Pray, Mr Douglas," said General Fortescue, addressing himself to Philip, "is your father a Scotchman? I should think so from the name."

Philip coloured painfully; and the general, perceiving his confusion, added, "Excuse the liberty I have taken in asking the question—it did not arise from idle curiosity. The dearest friend of my early days was a Douglas, and the name is connected in my remembrance with scenes in which I spent many of my happiest days, when hope gilded my visions of the future, alas! only to deceive me. Yes, if Gavin Douglas still survives, I must find him out."

"Gavin Douglas!" said Edward, in surprise; "was he a Douglas of Eskhall?"

"The same," replied he.

"My father!" said Edward.

"Is it possible! And art thou really the son of my dearest and earliest friend? Wonderful are the mysterious sympathies of nature! How strangely was I attracted towards you both, but more especially towards

your friend, whom I presume to be your younger brother?"

"No, he is not even a connection, though I hope he soon will be one."

"Then whose son is he?"

Philip, with cheeks glowing, and eyes flashing with vainly-resisted emotion, answered, in rapid and passionate accents—

"The son of one who was ashamed to own him; who deserted him in his infancy, and cast him shelterless upon the casual bounty of strangers; the nameless son of a nameless father; perhaps"—and his eye fell, and his voice trembled—"the offspring of shame, as of misfortune."

"Never, Philip!" said Edward; "the pure stream rises from the pure spring. Whoever your father may be, were he the highest in the land, did he know his son, he would be proud, not ashamed, to own him as such. But, as we have excited the general's curiosity, have you any objection to my gratifying it, by reciting the history of your life?"

Philip made a movement of assent; and Edward proceeded to give a rapid sketch of the events which we have already narrated, from the time of Philip's desertion down to his gallant conduct on board the Recovery.

The general had listened to his narrative with breathless interest; and, when it was concluded, asked, in a hurried and agitated manner—

"Was there no clue by which to trace his parentage? No writing, or other notice of his birth?"

"Yes—a paper, stating his name to be Philip, and that he was born of good family; and a ring."

"Here it is," said Philip, producing it.

The moment the general's eyes glanced upon it, his cheek turned deadly pale, he leaned for a moment backward against a tree, and then, with an eager and trembling hand, he touched

a spring at the back of the seal, and the shield flying open, the initials "P. & M. F." appeared engraved behind.

"My son!" exclaimed the general, embracing Philip, while the tears poured down his cheeks—"my long-lost Philip! Merciful Heaven! I thank thee! How blind I was, not to trace before the resemblance to your sainted mother! The very eyes and forehead of my beloved Mary! My son, my son! This hour repays me for years saddened by the misery of uncertainty!"

Philip, with tears of grateful joy, warmly returned the embraces of his newly-found parent, and, even in that moment of agitation, his thoughts gladly reverted to the removal of that which had been the principal obstacle to Catherine, the mystery of his birth. Edward Douglas, much affected by the unexpected recognition, had retired to some little distance, to leave the father and son to the free expression of their mutual feelings; but he was soon recalled to his former station by the general, who, shaking him heartily by the hand, said—

"Son of my dearest friend, I owe it to myself and to my boy to narrate to you the history of my past life, and to account to you both for what must appear my culpable and unpardonable neglect of him whose uncertain fate has caused me so many bitter moments."

The tale which followed we give in our own words, as our space will not allow us to be so diffuse as was the excited narrator.

The father of General Fortescue was a man of high family and extensive landed property in Ireland; proud of his only son, but prouder still of the ancient name and large possessions which he fondly hoped that son was destined to inherit. His mother had died in his early childhood, and his education was prosecuted under the superintendence of a worthy and excellent tutor, a Scotchman of the name of Campbell. The elder Fortescue, who had himself been brought up at

Eton, and who had a strong prejudice in favour of public education, sent his boy, when he was sufficiently old, to finish his education at that college. There it was his good fortune to be associated with Gavin Douglas, who was two years his senior, and immeasurably his superior in talent and character. Mild and gentle in demeanour, but firm and uncompromising in principle, Gavin was generally respected and beloved; his society was courted by all his fellow-students—but he distinguished young Fortescue with his particular friendship; and to the influence of that friendship the latter was indebted for all the better traits that adorned his character. Philip, in his letters, had often written, in the most glowing terms of youthful enthusiasm, of his talented and estimable friend; and his father, ever anxious to administer to his gratification, invited Gavin, whose parents were at the time on the Continent, to spend his vacation at Mount Fortescue, where he spent some weeks, delighted with his hospitable reception, but surprised at the luxury and profusion that surrounded him. But the scene was soon to change. Fortescue had been for years living in a style of splendid and careless hospitality, which had from time to time called forth ineffectual remonstrances from his faithful steward, and at last affairs were brought to a crisis by the villany of one for whom he had become security to a very considerable amount. To meet the demands of his creditors, his estates were sold; and, with about ten thousand pounds saved from their wreck, he retired to a small town on the shores of the Frith of Clyde, and, having procured a cadetship for his boy, sent him out to Bengal. This was a severe trial to old Fortescue. The loss of his estates he could have borne with comparative firmness, as far as his own comforts were concerned; but his pride as well as his affection was wounded, when he thought that his son would be obliged to seek in a *foreign* land that fortune which, but for his careless negligence and

profusion, he would have inherited in his *own.* Philip, full of the energy of youthful hope, was but little affected by the change in his father's circumstances, for the future was to him bright of promise; but he was greatly grieved at parting with his father, whose many excellent qualities had endeared him to his son's affection, and whose chief weakness was his high aristocratic pride. After ten years' residence in India, young Fortescue returned home on furlough, with the rank of captain, and found his father much altered in person, but equally unchanged in affection towards him, and in that pride of birth which had ever been his besetting sin—one of the fruits of which was, frequent invectives against ill-assorted marriages between those whose rank in life was unequal. After staying with his father for a short time, Captain Fortescue hastened to pay a long-promised visit to his friend Gavin Douglas, whose wife had lately died, and who was now living with his family at Eskhall. On his return, Gavin accompanied him, and remained for several weeks at Mr Fortescue's. During one of their rambles in the neighbourhood, they discovered, accidentally, that a daughter of Mr Campbell, Fortescue's former tutor, was living near them, under the protection of a maternal aunt. The young men soon sought and obtained an introduction to these ladies, by whom they were most cordially received, as friends of the departed Campbell. Mary Campbell was a beautiful, highly-accomplished girl of eighteen, perfectly natural and unaffected, and unconscious of the power of her charms. Not so young Fortescue. In vain did his more quick-sighted and prudent friend, Douglas, warn him of his danger; in vain did he remind him of the obstacle which his father's pride would offer to the prosperous indulgence of his growing passion: he renewed his visits day after day; and, though he had not spoken of love, his heart was no longer his own. She who was ever present to his thoughts became naturally the frequent theme of his

conversation, until his father remarked it, and scornfully and bitterly taunted him with his love for one so much his inferior in rank.

"Think no more of her, Philip," said he; "for, with my consent, you shall never degrade yourself by marrying one so much beneath you."

It was easier, however, for the father to command than for the son to obey; love prevailed over duty, and the young people were privately married; the only persons in the secret being the minister who officiated, and Mrs Morgan, Mary's maternal aunt. When the time of Mary's confinement approached, she removed with her aunt to an obscure village in a distant part of the country, where she died in giving birth to the hero of our tale. Her husband was inconsolable, and it was some time before he could bear to look upon the innocent cause of his bereavement. After performing the last duties to his wife, and witnessing the baptism of the infant Philip, whom he left under the care of his grand-aunt, Captain Fortescue went over to the Continent, hoping by travel to dissipate his grief. For a few months he heard regularly of his boy's welfare from Mrs Morgan; but soon her correspondence ceased; and, alarmed by her long-continued silence, he hastened home to ascertain the cause. On his arrival in Scotland, he heard of the sudden and dangerous illness of his father. He just reached home in time to attend his death-bed; and by his unexpected return and filial affections, cheered his last moments, and received his dying blessing. But another trial awaited him. He set off as soon as possible to the village where Mrs Morgan resided, little dreaming of the sad intelligence that awaited him. She had died about six weeks before, bequeathing all her small property to little Philip, who had always been considered as her adopted son, and the orphan child of a distant relation. The morning after her decease, it was discovered that the

nurse and child were missing, and that an escritoire, which was known to have contained a large sum of money, had been broken open and ransacked. Active search had been immediately made after them at first; but was discontinued, when a woman's bonnet, known to have belonged to the nurse, and part of a child's dress, were found on the banks of a neighbouring swollen stream. Poor Fortescue was in despair; but at length a gleam of hope broke upon him. The *bodies* had not been found; and his child might still be in existence. Advertisements were inserted in all the papers, offering a large reward for the discovery of the infant; but in vain. The heart-broken father lost all hope; and, settling his affairs, hastened again to the East. As is too often the case, fortune smiled upon one who had ceased to value her favours; and he rose steadily and gradually to the highest grades of his profession. The object of envy to others, he was miserable in himself. His thoughts brooded over the past; and at last, after nearly a thirty years' residence abroad, his heart yearned to revisit before his death the scene of his past joys and sorrows; and he was thus far on his voyage when Providence threw in his way his long-lost son.

When the general had finished his narrative, the day was too far advanced, and the feelings of the party were too much interested otherwise, to allow them to prosecute their intended visit to Constantia; they therefore returned to Cape Town, where Catherine was anxiously expecting their return.

"Catherine, my love," said her father, "I expect a friend to visit me almost immediately. He is a young man of wealth and rank; and I beg you will give him a cordial welcome, as you must look upon him as your future husband, and think no more of Philip Douglas."

"Sir!" said she, with the colour fading in her cheek; "forget Philip! Never!"

At this moment the door opened, and a servant announced, "Mr Fortescue." Great was Catherine's surprise, when she raised her eyes, and beheld Philip.

"Philip!" exclaimed she; then, looking timidly and inquiringly around, she added, "But where is Mr Fortescue?"

"Here he stands, my dear Catherine; no longer the foundling Philip Douglas, but Philip Fortescue, the son of one whom he is proud to call father. Next to the joy of discovering *him*, is that of finding that you have bestowed your love on one whose birth will cast no discredit upon yours."

"The heart acknowledges no distinctions of rank or fortune," replied she, blushing; "whether Douglas or Fortescue, you would still be my own dear Philip—the friend of my childhood—the preserver of my life."

"Nobly spoken, my fair young friend," said General Fortescue, who had entered unperceived. "Although I am not yet your father, allow me to claim a father's privilege." And he fondly kissed the blushing Catherine.

But we must hasten to the conclusion of our voyage, and of our tale. The following announcement appeared two months afterwards in the papers—"Married, at Eskhall, in Dumfries-shire, on the 13th inst., Philip, eldest son of General Fortescue of the Bengal army, to Catherine, daughter of Edward Douglas, Esq., of Calcutta."

THE SKEAN DHU.

"BLESS me, Angus! do you wear a weapon of that kind about you? I never knew it before," said John Sommerville to his friend Angus M'Intyre, as he sat looking at him one morning performing his toilet; an operation which discovered the latter thrusting a *skean dhu*—which all our readers know is a short knife, with a black horn handle, once a favourite weapon of the Highlanders—beneath the breast of his coat, into a sheath which seemed to have been placed there for the especial purpose.

"Did you not know that before, John?" said Angus, with a faint smile, but at the same time evidently desiring that there should be no more remarks made on the subject; for he hastily buttoned up his coat, after having placed the weapon in its sheath, as if to cut the conversation short by putting its subject out of sight.

"No, indeed, I did not," replied Sommerville. "I never saw it before, and never heard you carried such a thing about you. It's a dangerous weapon, Angus; and you are a more dangerous man than I thought you," he added, smiling.

"Tuts! nonsense, man!" said M'Intyre, impatiently. "It'll never harm you, at any rate, John."

"No, no; I daresay not," replied his friend, good-humouredly; "but it may hurt others, though. Let me see it, Mac."

Angus reluctantly complied with his request, and put the tiny but formidable weapon into his hands.

"It has my initials, I declare, on the handle!" exclaimed Sommerville, as he looked at the letters J. S. which were engraved on the butt-end of the knife.

"Yes," replied his friend; "it belonged to my maternal grandfather, John Stewart of Ardnahulish."

Sommerville returned the weapon without further remark, and here the conversation dropped. We will avail ourselves of the opportunity to say who the parties were whom we have thus somewhat abruptly introduced to the reader.

Angus M'Intyre was a native of the Island of Skye, in the West Highlands of Scotland, and was, at the period of our story (now a pretty old one, as it happened in the year 17—), an officer of excise in Glasgow. At this period, the Highland character had not lost all its original ferocity, and, consequently, the circumstance of an officer of excise, who was a Highlander, wearing a dirk, even in the discharge of the peaceable duties—though they were not always so either—that fell to his lot in a large town, was not by any means considered so very extraordinary a thing as it would be now. M'Intyre, as we have said, was a native of the West Highlands of Scotland, and an admirable specimen of the hardy and intrepid race from which he sprang. He was a very handsome man, and of the most daring courage, as had been often proved in the perilous adventures in which his profession occasionally engaged him. He was, however, of a remarkably quiet disposition, though fiery and irascible when provoked; but so much did the former prevail in his nature, that no one who did not know him intimately would have guessed how fiery a spirit lay couched underneath this thin covering of placidity, nor deemed, unless they saw that spirit roused, how formidable a man in his anger its possessor was. Yet, withal, was he a man of a kind and generous heart. The habit of carrying the deadly weapon to which we have alluded, Angus had acquired when a youth in the Highlands, where it was then common to be so armed; and this habit had adhered to him, notwithstanding the entire change of life to which his new oc-

cupation as an excise officer had introduced him. Angus, in short, although they had made him a clergyman, would, it was believed by those who knew him, have carried his skean dhu with him to the pulpit. He made no boast, however, of being possessed of this weapon. On the contrary, as we have already in part shown, he very much disliked any allusion to it; for it was known by a few of his most intimate friends that he did carry such a thing about with him, and by these such allusions were sometimes made; but the former, although they had often seen his naturally fiery temper put to very severe test, never knew an instance of his having taken advantage of his concealed arms, even to the extent of a threat, excepting in the single instance of which we are about to speak; but that alone is sufficient to show—in a very striking light, we think—the miserable effects of introducing or maintaining barbarous habits—more especially that of wearing secret weapons—into civilised and social life.

Of Sommerville, we have not much to say in the way of description. He was in the same service with M'Intyre—that is, the excise; and was about the same age—thirty-two or thirty-three. They were intimate friends, and as frequently together as the nature of their duties would permit; and were both unmarried. On the same day on which the conversation with which we opened our story took place, it happened that Angus and Sommerville were invited together to a tavern-dinner in the Saltmarket, with some mutual friends. About an hour previous to that appointed for the festive meeting, Sommerville called on M'Intyre at his lodgings, with the view of waiting for him, that they might go together to the house where they were to dine. A few minutes before they left M'Intyre's lodgings for this purpose, Sommerville said, playfully,

"By the by, Mac, I hope you do not intend taking that infernal weapon with you to-night?"

"Tuts, man," replied M'Intyre, somewhat testily, never mind it. What need ye always harp on that string? Did you never know of a gentleman wearing a dirk before? It's no such extraordinary or terrible thing, surely."

"Terrible enough in reckless hands," said Sommerville.

M'Intyre looked more and more displeased, as his friend continued to cling to the subject; but his only reply was,

"Nonsense, John! Come, let us be going—it's near the hour.

"Well, I tell you what it is, Angus," remarked his friend, banteringly, and still pertinaciously dwelling on the skean dhu, "I won't sit beside you to-night—I'll take care of that; no, nor within arm's-length of you either."

"Sit where you please," replied M'Intyre, angrily, and he flung out of the apartment, followed by Sommerville.

On their reaching the tavern, the company were already assembled, and were waiting their presence before sitting down to table. As soon as they entered, however, places were taken; and it happened by chance that the only vacant chair left for Sommerville was one next his friend M'Intyre. On observing this, the former jokingly declined it, saying,

"No, no, Mac—I won't sit near you, as I said before. Ye're no canny—I have discovered that." And he winked significantly; and, following up the jesting resolution which he had just expressed, he eventually took his place at a different part of the table. M'Intyre said nothing in reply to his friend's remarks; but there was a frown upon his brow that showed pretty plainly, though none present observed it, that he was very far from being pleased with them. In truth, he was highly irritated at what appeared to him the silly, provoking pertinacity of his friend, in dwelling on a subject which, he thought, the latter might have discovered before, by his manner, was disagreeable to him. Nay, to make matters worse, he had no doubt that he had discovered

it; and that this, instead of being considered by him as a reason for refraining, was deemed directly the reverse—an excellent source of small annoyance. What followed on this fatal night will, we think, be most graphically related in the words of a person, another intimate friend of M'Intyre's, who was present:—

At the close of the entertainment (said the person alluded to), which was protracted to a pretty late hour, some high words suddenly arose between M'Intyre and Sommerville; the former being evidently predisposed, from some cause or other, to quarrel with the latter; but so few were they, that I paid but little attention to them, and had no difficulty in reconciling the parties, as I imagined; but in this, at least in so far as regarded M'Intyre, I was mistaken. No more words, however, of an angry nature passed between them. At length the party broke up—M'Intyre, Sommerville, and myself remaining a short time behind, when we also left. Sommerville went first, M'Intyre followed, and I went last. In this order we were passing through the entrance, which was quite dark, to gain the street, when I was suddenly horror-struck by hearing Sommerville utter a loud shriek, and, in a moment after, saying, in a hoarse, unearthly tone, as he staggered against the wall, "I am a murdered man!—M'Intyre has stabbed me!"

Guessing precisely what had taken place, I rushed to the mouth of the entrance, and saw M'Intyre crossing the street with as calm and deliberate a step as if nothing had happened; and, immediately after, he turned a corner and disappeared. I now returned to Sommerville, whom I found still leaning against the wall, with his hand upon his wound. In an instant after, he fell, groaned heavily, and, when I stooped down to assist him, I found he was gone. Several persons had, by this time, assembled round us; and, by the assistance of two or three of these, we had the body of the unfortunate man conveyed to his lodgings. Next morning.

having occasion to be abroad very early, and to pass the residence of the procurator-fiscal, I saw three men, whom I knew to be criminal officers, just entering the house. In an instant it crossed my mind that this untimous visit of these gentlemen to the functionary above named was, in some way or other, connected with the melancholy event of the preceding night, and that my unfortunate friend M'Intyre was about to be apprehended. Fully impressed with this idea, I instantly hastened to his lodgings, taking such short cuts and by-ways as I knew would give me several minutes' start of his pursuers—if the men I saw really were to become such—and the sequel will show they did. On entering M'Intyre's room, which I did in considerable agitation, I found him, to my great amazement, sound asleep.

"M'Intyre," said I, shaking him violently by the shoulder, "I fear there is a warrant out against you, or at least that there will be one out immediately; so, for God's sake, rise, and let us see whether we cannot find a hiding-place for you." I then hastily mentioned to him the grounds of my suspicions of such being the case. While I was speaking, the unhappy man looked at me with an expression of extreme surprise, and as if he did not at all comprehend what I meant. In truth, neither he did; for he had at the moment no recollection whatever of the dreadful deed he had perpetrated—a circumstance which left no doubt of his having been greatly under the influence of liquor when it was done, although I did not at the time think so. By degrees, however, the horrible truth flashed upon him; and the painful realities of the preceding night stood before him. His, however, was a stout heart. His firm nerves shook not under the pressure of the dreadful circumstances in which he was placed. He made no remarks on my communication, but immediately rose, and put on his clothes; and this he did with a coolness and deliberation that both

amazed and irritated me; for I was afraid that the officers of justice would be in upon us every moment. Having at length dressed, we both sallied out, although I did not at all know which direction I should recommend my unfortunate friend to take; neither had he himself any idea whither he should go. We, however, proceeded down the street in which he lived; and, just as we were about turning the corner at the foot, happening to look round, we saw the officers in the act of entering the street at the opposite end. At this alarming sight, we of course quickened our pace, although we calculated that some time would be gained by the search to which we did not doubt the officers would subject the house in which M'Intyre lived. I could not but admire the coolness and presence of mind which my unfortunate friend exhibited under these trying circumstances, although I certainly could have wished the exhibition made in a better cause, and on a more honourable occasion. In his manner there was not the least flurry nor agitation. He remained perfectly calm and collected, although an ignominious death was now staring him in the face. After we had proceeded a little way, M'Intyre suddenly stopped, and, addressing me, remarked that my accompanying him could serve no good end, but rather increase the difficulty of his escape, and that therefore I had better leave him. To the propriety of this remark I could not but subscribe; and I therefore, though reluctantly—for, notwithstanding the rash and indefensible act he had committed, I could not forget the character which my unfortunate friend had formerly borne, which was that of an honest, honourable, and warmhearted man—agreed to leave him. Before we parted, he told me that he now recollected that, previously to his returning to his lodgings, after he had stabbed Sommerville, he had gone down to the Clyde, and tossed the fatal weapon with which he had done the deed as far as he could throw it into the river; but whether this was

merely a precautionary measure, to break at least one link in the chain of evidence, or the result of a feeling of horror at what he had done, he did not explain; but my impression was, that it was the latter. Having agreed in the propriety of my friend's remark as to the additional danger to which my accompanying him further would expose him, we parted —I to return to my lodgings, and he to seek shelter where he might, for he had not at the moment the smallest idea whither he should direct his steps.

For about ten days after this, I heard nothing of my unhappy friend; but, at the end of that period, I learned that he had been apprehended, and was then in Glasgow Jail. This intelligence was subsequently confirmed by a note from himself, which I received, intimating his apprehension, and requesting me to call upon him. With this request I complied, and found my unfortunate friend in the dreadful circumstances of an imprisoned criminal. He was, however, still calm and collected; and appeared perfectly resigned to the fate which, he had not the smallest doubt, awaited him—namely, that he should die upon the scaffold; and, indeed, no reasonable man could have expected any other issue; nor could it be denied that he deserved it. Our interview was short, as it was necessarily carried on in the presence of a turnkey, and therefore confined to merely general topics. The unhappy man himself, besides, showed no disposition to prolong it; and, observing this, I withdrew, after obtaining his promise to apply to me for anything he might want, and for any service it might be in my power to render him.

About three weeks after this, while I was at breakfast one morning, my landlady came into my room, to inform me that there was a young woman at the door who wished to speak with me. I desired her to be shown in. She entered; and a more interesting-looking girl I have rarely seen. She appeared to me about one-and-twenty years of age, and was

extremely graceful, both in person and manner. The latter, indeed, bespoke a much more elevated condition than her dress—which was that of a domestic servant—seemed to indicate. Her style of language, too, discovered the same contradiction to appearances.

Curtseying as she entered, and blushing as she spoke —"You are, sir, I believe," said she "a friend of poor M'Intyre's, just now in Glasgow Jail, for—for——" And here her emotion prevented her further utterance.

"I was," replied I, interposing to save her feelings, which I saw were painfully excited, "and I still am, his friend. Would to God I had some way of showing him, in his misfortune, how sincerely I am so!"

This I said with a degree of earnestness and fervour that seemed to make a strong impression on my fair, but mysterious visiter. She became pale and agitated, and I thought I could even discover a tear glittering in her eye. When this momentary emotion had passed away—

"Then," she said, "I need not hesitate to trust you with a secret." And she glanced towards the door, to see that it was shut. "This night," she resumed, "M'Intyre will escape from prison."

"Escape!—how?—by what means?" I exclaimed, in amazement.

"By mine," she replied, calmly.

"By yours!" I said, with increased astonishment.

"Yes, sir, by mine. This night at twelve o'clock he will be without the prison walls, and at liberty, and you must then do him the last service he is ever likely to require at your hands. You will have a chaise waiting at the hour I have mentioned, at the first mile-stone on the Greenock road. Will you do this, and save the life of your unfortunate friend?"

Although a good deal confused by the suddenness and singularity of the whole affair, I, without a moment's hesi-

tation or reflection, replied that I would; and, having made this promise, I asked my visiter if she would further confide in me, by telling me all the particulars connected with the proposed escape of my friend.

"Not now—not now," she said, gathering a tartan plaid, which she wore, round her, as if to depart; "but you will probably learn all afterwards. In the meantime, farewell! and, as you would have a friend do to you in similar circumstances, so do you to your friend. Be faithful to your promise."

And, ere I could make any further remark, or put any other question, she hurried out of the apartment, hastily opened the street door, rushed out, and disappeared.

Interrupting this personal narrative for a time, we will shift the scene, on the eventful night in question—eventful, at least, to the unfortunate subject of our story—to the house of the jailer in whose custody he was; and here we shall find, in the capacity of a domestic servant, a young woman, bearing a very striking resemblance to her who visited M'Intyre's friend, as above described. Indeed, there can be no doubt that they are the same. It was the jailer's custom, at this time, to make the rounds of the prison precisely at nine o'clock every night, to see that all was secure; and when this survey was completed, to carry all the keys with him to his own house, which was included in the general building, and had interior communication with that portion of it where prisoners were confined. On bringing up the keys, as usual, on the night of which we are speaking, the jailer gave them in charge to his wife, as he was invited out to join a party of friends on some occasion of merry-making—a circumstance which had been previously known to his family, and, amongst the rest, to the servant girl a short while since alluded to. Having received the keys from her husband, the jailer's wife carried them to her own bedroom for greater safety, and there deposited them in a

drawer. In less than two hours after, this drawer was secretly visited by the young woman just spoken of, and a particular key carefully selected, detached from the rest, and transferred from the drawer in which it had lain into her pocket, when she withdrew with her prize. Shortly after this, the jailer returned, and retired to bed. When the whole was still, the purloiner of the key might have been seen stealing, with cautious steps, down the staircase that led into the principal passage of the prison, where were stationed two turnkeys—one at the outer door, and one at the inner. Advancing to the former—

"James," said the girl, "Mr Simpson" (the name of the jailer) "desires to see you up-stairs immediately. Go to the little parlour, and wait for him there, and he'll come to you directly."

"Lassie," said the man, "I canna leave the door richtly; but if he wants me, I suppose I maun gang."

"I'll keep the key till you return," said the former, "and tell Andrew" (meaning the inner turnkey) "to look after the door till you return, James."

"Ay, do, like a dear," replied the unsuspecting turnkey, handing her the key, and hastening away to attend the call of his superior.

On his departure, the girl went, as she had promised, to the other turnkey; but it was to deliver a very different message from that she had undertaken. To him, in truth, she made precisely the same communication as she had done to his neighbour, with a difference of destination—him she directed to wait his master in the kitchen. This guardian, trusting in the vigilance of him of the outer door, of whose absence he was unaware, made no difficulty whatever of obeying, but instantly ascended to the jailer's kitchen, where he patiently awaited the appearance of his superior. Having thus disposed of the two turnkeys, the girl now, with a beating heart, flew to the door of the apartment in which

M'Intyre was confined, applied the key to the lock, turned its huge bolt, and the way was clear.

"Angus M'Intyre," she said, on flinging up the door, "come forth, come forth, and fly instantly for your life! There are none to oppose you."

"In the name of God, who are you?" said M'Intyre, instinctively obeying the call to liberty and freedom. "I should know that voice," he added, endeavouring to obtain a glimpse of the face of his deliverer, but in vain, as she was carefully hooded, and the place profoundly dark.

"Hush! hush!—not a word!" said the latter. "What does it signify to you who I am? Off, off instantly!—you have not a moment to lose. This way, this way." And she hurried the astonished prisoner, though now no longer so, through the deserted passage of the jail, till they reached the outer door, to which she applied the key with which its simple guardian had intrusted her, and in the next instant M'Intyre and his deliverer were in the street. On gaining it—

"Now, fly, Angus," said the latter, thrusting, at the same time, a purse of money into his hand. "At the first milestone on the Greenock road, you will find a chaise waiting you. In that you will proceed to Greenock, where you will find a ship to sail to-morrow for New York. Embark on board of her; and you will then, I trust, escape the vengeance of man—it must be your own business, Angus, to deprecate that of your God." And without waiting for any reply, or permitting herself to be known to her companion, she hastened away in the opposite direction to that she had pointed out to M'Intyre, and disappeared. The latter, bewildered with the suddenness and strangeness of the proceeding which had thus so mysteriously led to his liberation, stood for a second confused, irresolute, and undetermined. His first idea was to pursue his deliverer, and to insist on ascertaining who she was; but even the moment he took to

deliberate had put this out of his power, for the night was dark, and she was already out of sight; and where there were so many ready places of concealment, the pursuit was a hopeless one. M'Intyre perceived this; and aware, at the same time, how necessary it was that he should instantly quit the vicinity of the jail, he hastened to the place where he had been told a chaise would be waiting him. The chaise was there; M'Intyre flung himself into it, reached Greenock in about four hours afterwards, and, before another sun had sunk in the west, he was sailing down the Frith of Clyde, on his way to the opposite shores of the Atlantic.

Three years after the occurrence of the events just related (continued the narrator whom we have already quoted), during which time I had heard nothing more of M'Intyre than that he had effected his escape, nor anything whatever of his deliverer, I was removed, by order of the Board of Excise, to the Island of Skye, where I was settled, perhaps, about a year, when, one day, as I was crossing the country from Portree to Meystead—a place celebrated in the wanderings of Prince Charles—I met a party of ladies and gentlemen coming in the opposite direction. They were a merry squad, with the exception of one of the ladies, who seemed to take but little share in the obstreperous mirth of her companions; and it was owing to this circumstance, perhaps, that I found her engrossing a greater share of my attention than the others; for, in that hospitable country, we were friends the moment we met, although we had never seen each other before; and the party, having some provisions with them, I was requested to favour them with my company to a dejeune, which, they informed me, they had been on the eve of making before I joined them. Readily accepting their kind invitation, I accompanied my new friends in search of a suitable spot for the proposed entertainment. This was soon found; and we all sat down

on the grass to partake of the good things provided for the occasion. During the repast, I could not keep my eyes off the lady whose melancholy had first attracted my attention; for I felt an impression that I had seen the face somewhere before; but when, where, or under what circumstances, I could not at all recollect. She seemed also to recognise me; for there was a marked confusion and agitation, both in her countenance and manner, from the moment I joined the party to which she belonged. Guessing, from these expressions, that it would not be agreeable to her that I should make any attempt at renewing our acquaintance, of whatever nature that might have been, in the presence of her friends, I forbore; but determined, if an opportunity was afforded me, of doing so before we parted, as I felt all that curiosity and uneasiness which such vague and imperfect recognition of a person's identity is so apt to create. The opportunity I desired, the lady, of her own accord, subsequently afforded me.

When our repast was concluded, she said, addressing me—

"We are going, sir, to see the falls of Lubdearg, about a mile from this. It is a very magnificent one; and, if you have never seen it before, and are in no great hurry to prosecute your journey, you will perhaps accompany us. My friends here, I am sure, will be glad of such an addition to their party."

The falls she alluded to I had never seen; and for this reason, but still more for that before hinted at, I gladly accepted the proposal of becoming one of the party to Lubdearg. While we were proceeding thither, my inviter contrived to drop a little way behind her friends; which perceiving, and conjecturing that she did so for the especial purpose of affording me an opportunity of speaking with her, I availed myself of it, with a degree of caution that prevented all appearance of connivance, and joined her.

Being considerably apart from the others, she said, smiling—

"You have recognised me, I rather think, sir; but do you recollect where and under what circumstances it was that you saw me?"

"I do not indeed; I have not the most distant idea," I said; "but I certainly do recollect having seen you before."

"And I, too, recollect well of having seen you. It is impossible I should ever forget either you or the occasion that introduced me to you. Do you," she added, "recollect of a young woman calling on you one morning at your lodgings, to request of you to have a chaise in readiness, on the Greenock road, to aid"—and here she paused a moment, and betrayed great emotion—"the escape," she resumed, "of Angus M'Intyre."

I need hardly say that, short as this sentence was, I knew ere it was half concluded that it was the deliverer of my unhappy friend who stood before me.

"I do, I do, perfectly," I replied—"you are the very person. This is, indeed, strange—most singular—our meeting here again, and in this way. But who, in Heaven's name, are you?" I added; "that I have never yet known."

The lady smiled sadly. "Did you ever hear your unfortunate friend speak of one Miss Eliza Stewart?" she said.

"Often, often," I replied; "to that lady I always understood he was to have been married, had not that deplorable occurrence taken place, which so miserably changed his destiny, and marred all his prospects in life."

"It was so," said my fair companion, with increased emotion. "I am that person."

"Impossible!"

"It is true; I am Eliza Stewart."

"Then, here is more perplexity and mystery," said I. "How, in all the world, came you to appear to me in the dress and character of a servant girl—you, who are a lady

both by birth and education?" (this I knew from M'Intyre) "and how, above all, did you effect the escape of our unfortunate friend?"

The lady again smiled with a melancholy air. "I will inform you of all," she said, "in a very few words. At the time of Angus' misfortune, I lived, as you may probably know, with my father at ——, in Skye here. On hearing of what had taken place, and of Angus' apprehension, I hastened to Glasgow on pretence of visiting a friend, and got into the house of the jailer in the character of a domestic servant. I will not say by whose means I effected this, as it might still bring ruin on their heads." And here my fair informant gave me the details which are already before the reader. "On effecting his escape," she went on, "I immediately resumed my own dress, and returned to my father's house, where it was next to impossible to detect, in his daughter, the servant girl of the Glasgow jailer. Our remote situation, besides, further secured me from the chance of discovery; and I have not yet been discovered, nor do I suppose I ever will now."

"And why," said I, laughingly, "did you not share the fortunes of the man in whom you thus took so deep an interest?"

"No, no," said the heroic girl, with an expression of deep feeling; "I loved M'Intyre, I confess it, with the most sincere and devoted affection—what I did for him proves it; but I could not think of uniting myself to a man whose hand was red with the blood of a fellow-creature; for it cannot be denied that our unfortunate friend, notwithstanding all his good qualities, was—there is no disguising it—a ——" Here her emotions prevented her finishing the sentence—nor did she afterwards finish it; but I had no doubt the word she would have supplied was "murderer."

"Now, sir, you know all," she continued, on recovering from her perturbation; "but you will make no allusion, I

beg of you, to anything I have told you, to my friends here, amongst whom are my father, mother, and a sister, who know nothing whatever of the part I acted in effecting M'Intyre's escape."

With this request I promised compliance. We reached the falls of Lubdearg. I parted with Eliza Stewart; and we never met again, as, in a few days afterwards, I left the island; and with this event terminated all connecting circumstances on my part with "The Skean Dhu."

THE SEVEN YEARS' DEARTH.

It was a good many years before the accession of King William III. to the throne of Britain, that a farmer of the name of William Kerr rented a farm in the parish of Minniegaff, in the county of Wigton, on the great road to Port-Patrick. The farm lay at some distance from the road, at the foot of the hills—a wild and secluded spot, possessing few beauties, save to a person who had been reared in the neighbourhood, whose earliest associations were blended with the scenes of his youth.

This farm of Kerr's was of far greater extent than importance, only a few acres of it being in cultivation; but his flock of sheep was pretty extensive, and his black cattle numerous. He was looked upon as a wealthy man at the period of which we speak, had been married for many years, but had no children to enjoy that wealth which increased from year to year. This was the only drawback to his earthly happiness; but he never repined, or let a word escape his lips, to betray the wish of his heart. Even the rude taunts of his more fortunate neighbours he bore with unruffled countenance, though he felt them keenly; and he still loved Grizzel his wife with all the fervour of his first affection—an affection that was returned with usury.

Such was the situation of the worthy farmer, when, one morning in harvest, he went out with the earliest dawn to look after some sheep he had upon a hill in a distant part of the farm. He had counted them, and was returning to join the reapers, accompanied by Colin, his faithful dog, who, in devious excursions, circled round the large grey stones that lay scattered about. He had proceeded for

some way without missing the animal, when he stopped and whistled for him. Colin, contrary to his usual custom, did not come bounding to his side, but answered by a loud barking—a circumstance which a little surprised him; but he proceeded homeward, thinking that he was amusing himself with some animal he had discovered; and being in haste to join his reapers, paid no further attention to this act of disobedience in his favourite. Breakfast passed, and midday came, and still Colin did not make his appearance. His master was both angry and uneasy at his absence; but, in the bustle and laughter of the harvest field, again forgot the occasional thoughts of his useful dog that obtruded themselves on his mind. It drew towards evening, and still no Colin came. The circumstance was becoming unaccountable; none had seen the dog; and uneasiness succeeded to anger. He now left his reapers, and went to the house to inquire of Grizzel if the animal had been in the house; but she answered that she had only seen him once in the early part of the day, for a minute or two, when, after receiving a piece of cake, he had ran off with it in his mouth, nor stopped to eat it, contrary to his usual custom. This, with the circumstance of his leaving him in the morning, and his unaccountable absence, confirmed William Kerr in his opinion that something uncommon must have happened to him. As he could ill do without his assistance to gather his sheep for the night, without returning to his reapers, he set out for the spot where the dog had left him, ever and anon calling him by his well-known whistle and name. The large grey stones and barren muir echoed the call; but no Colin appeared. At length he came to the place, and was surprised and overtaken with fear, as he observed the animal stretched upon the ground, with something close beside him, which he seemed to watch.

"Colin, Colin!" he called; "poor Colin!"

The dog did not rise: he gave every mute token of joy

and pleasure at the sight of his master, looking over his bushy shoulder, and wagging his tail; but he made no effort to stir—fearful, apparently, of disturbing the object that lay beside him.

"Surely," said his master, "my poor dog is bewitched. Colin, you rascal, what have you there? Come with me to the sheep." But Colin moved not.

The farmer stood rooted to the spot; he had neither the power to advance nor retreat; a superstitious fear took possession of him; his hair moved upon his head; a tingling feeling seemed to excite every muscle of his body, and deprive it of voluntary motion. The fear, in fact, of the fairies was upon him; he conceived himself the victim of fascination—a conception well justified by his own conduct, for he could not, for a time, withdraw his eyes from the object of his alarm. When the subject was considered, there was ground for his fear. Before him, under the shadow of a large grey boulder stone, within a few yards, lay his faithful dog—a creature that had never before required a second call from him—now deaf to that voice it was his former pleasure to obey at every hazard. He was supporting something that had the appearance of a lovely child sound asleep, nestled close into his bosom, the head resting upon his shaggy side, and its curly, golden hair appearing like rays of light on the pillow upon which it rested. The face appeared more beauteous than anything of this earth he had ever seen—so delicate, so clear, so beautifully blended was rose and lily; but the eyes were swollen and red with weeping, pearly drops stole in slow succession from its dark eyelashes, while a heavy sob swelled its little bosom as if it would awaken it. The farmer, with his eyes almost starting from their sockets, incapable of motion or cool reflection, stood gazing upon the pair as they lay before him—the one unconscious, the other, while showing every symptom of joy he could silently

express at sight of his master, yet seemingly fearful as an anxious mother of disturbing his sleeping charge. As William Kerr's surprise began to abate, his fears, if possible, increased.

"Surely," he said to himself, "this is one of the children of the fairies. God protect me! I am bewitched as well as my poor dog. I never felt thus before in the presence of mere earthly being. I cannot move—my knees can scarce support me—I cannot withdraw my eyes from that fearful object. God deliver me from the power of the enemy!" And he shut his eyelids by a convulsive effort.

He then attempted to pray, but memory had fled; nor psalm nor prayer could he call up to his aid, the palsy of fear had so completely unhinged him. The very beauty of the object increased his alarm; for he had heard that Satan is never more to be feared than when he appears as an angel of light. With his eyes shut by a nervous effort, he turned himself round, and ran to his reapers.

As he approached them, and the distance increased between him and the object of his fears, his natural firmness returned; but his countenance still betrayed the agitation of his mind. The reapers were just quitting the field, having accomplished the labours of the day; and, seeing him running towards them, crowded round him, eagerly inquiring the cause of his alarm. It was some time before he could recover his breath (so swiftly had he run), to give them an account of what he had seen, and express his regret for the loss of Colin, whom he never more expected to see. The whole group were struck with fear and amazement, gazing alternately at the farmer and each other—not knowing what to think of the strange case; but all agreed that some effort ought to be made for the recovery of the dog. John Bell, an elder of the church, and a neighbour farmer, spoke and said—

"My brethren, the power of the evil one is great; but

it is overruled by One greater and more glorious. Let us employ His aid; then we shall go forth in the strength of our faith, and Satan shall flee from before us."

He then prayed, and the reapers kneeled. When his address was finished, he arose with a firm assurance in the divine protection.

"I will go forth," said he, "in the strength of His name, and see what new delusion of Satan this is. William Kerr, send to the house for the ha' Bible, that I may carry it as a shield between us and the wiles of him who will vanish before the holy Book, like mist before the wind."

One of the young men ran to the house, and soon returned, with his mistress, she herself carrying the important volume, which she delivered into the hands of John Bell; and the latter, opening it, read aloud to them that beautiful chapter, the fourteenth of St John's Gospel. They then proceeded to the spot pointed out by the farmer, chanting a psalm, which the elder gave out, as they walked behind him. All, excepting the elder, were unnerved by fear—casting many a timid glance around, and ready, at the least alarm, to run back. Curiosity to see the conclusion, and shame, more than firmness, compelled them to advance. Before they reached the stone where the farmer had seen his dog and his charge, Colin came bounding to them, barking for joy, and fawning upon his master and mistress; while the former, in a burst of joy at the recovery of his favourite, exclaimed—

"Great is the power of the Word! The charm is broken! Colin, Colin, I am rejoiced to have rescued you from the evil powers. Come, lad, let us to the hill, and weer in the ewes." And, with his usual whistle, he pointed to the hill.

Colin would not yet obey the wonted order, but ran back towards the large grey stone, barking in an unusual manner, returning, again running towards it, and looking back as if he wished his master to follow. The whole group were in

amazement, and knew not what to think of these strange actions of the dog; but they had yet more to be surprised at; for, taking the end of his master's plaid in his mouth, the creature endeavoured gently to drag him towards the stone. As the party thus stood irresolute, the faint wailing of a child was distinctly heard, and a babe, supporting its feeble arms upon the stone, was seen to emerge from the other side of it. It was the same the farmer had previously seen: his fears returned—several of the most timid fled; but Colin ran to the little stranger, and licked the tears that streamed down its cheeks, while the child put its arms around his neck, and leaned its head upon its new friend. That they witnessed something out of the usual order of nature, no one present had the smallest doubt; for how, by earthly means, could a child of man have reached a spot so lonely and secluded? The farmer and his wife both endeavoured, by the most endearing terms, to induce Colin to leave it; but in vain.

"What can this mean?" exclaimed Grizzel. "Colin, Colin, you never before refused to obey my voice; surely nothing good could induce you to disregard it. Come, come, and leave that unearthly creature."

John Bell, who had been occupied in mental devotion, at length broke silence—

"Let us not judge harshly," said he; "perhaps it is a Christian child, dropped here by the fairies as they were bearing it away from its parents, who now mourn for its loss, and nurse a changeling in its place. It may have been rescued by the prayer of faith, or some other means, from their power. In the strength of His name, I will be convinced of its real nature, either by putting it to flight if it is unearthly, or rescuing it from death if it is human; for we must not leave it here to perish through cold and want, and prove ourselves more cruel than the dumb animal."

As he spoke, the eye of the child turned towards them;

it gave a feeble cry, and stretched out its arms, still supported by the dog. The elder advanced to it, and placing the Bible upon its head, it smiled in his face, and grasped his leg. The tears came into the good man's eyes, while Colin bounded for joy, and licked his hand as it rested upon the head of the child.

"Come forward, my friends," he said; "it is a lovely child, a Christian babe, for it smiles at the touch of the blessed Word. It is weak and sore spent, and calls for attention and kindness."

All the woman was kindled in the heart of the farmer's wife; she ran to the babe, and pressed it to her bosom, kissing it as it smiled in her face, and lisped a few words in a language none present could understand. The fears of all were now nearly dissipated; those who had fled returned; all the females in turn embraced the babe; but the fondness of William Kerr for the foundling was now equal to his former fears. He at once resolved to adopt it as his own, until its sorrowing parents should reclaim it. Grizzel concurred in the sentiment and resolution; and he and Colin, who now had resumed all his wonted obedience, set off for the hill, while the other returned to the house. As Grizzel carried the child home, she felt her love for it increase; and the void that had existed in her bosom ever since her marriage was fast filling up. The child's eyes were of a deep hazel, and gave indications of beauty; and its clothes were of a far finer texture than those worn by children of humble rank, and bespoke a good origin. Of all the females present, she alone felt assured that it was a proper child, because she wished it to be so; the others looked upon it still with some misgivings; revolving, doubtless, in their minds, the strangeness of all the circumstances attending the affair —and not the least of these was the locality of the child's position. It was a lonely spot, bearing no good name, close by a beautiful green knoll, standing by a spring of

pure water, and covered with daisies; while all around was heather or stunted grass, resembling an oasis in the desert. Strange sights were reported to have been seen near it; and the shepherd lads, in the still evenings of summer, were wont to hear there strange humming noises, mixed with faint tinklings—sure signs, of course, of the presence of the fairies. It was called the Fairy Knowe, while the stone was called the Eldrich Stone—names of bad omen, and sufficient to scare all visiters after nightfall. The newly-awakened feelings of Grizzel deprived all these ideas and recollections of that weight which operated with the other females, and warped their opinions; and, while they concluded that nothing good could be found in such a spot, they cautioned Grizzel, in their kindness, to be wary that the creature did her no harm. Grizzel herself was not without some misgivings; but she clung to the babe that lay in her bosom, and resolved to put to the test, as soon as she reached home, whether it was really a fairy, or a child stolen by these kidnappers. She believed her test to be sufficient to make it, if a fairy, leave her presence; if a human babe, to place it beyond their power to recover it, cleanse it from any spell they might have put upon it, secure it from the evil eye, and prevent its being forespoken. For these most important purposes she borrowed a piece of money (without assigning a reason for wanting it) from one of her neighbours, and, as soon as she reached home, secured herself in the spence with the babe (for no one must see her in the act), put the piece of money into some clean water with salt, stripped the child to the skin, washed it carefully, then took its shift and passed it thrice through the smoke of the fire, and put it on again, with the wrong side out. All this was done not without fear and trembling on the part of Grizzel; but her new-found treasure was unchanged, and smiled sweetly in her face as she proceeded in her superstitious operation. Having supplied its little wants, now

fully assured, she put it to bed with joy and satisfaction, and looked on it till it fell into a sweet sleep. Scarce had she accomplished this, when William Kerr entered with John Bell, upon whom he had called as he returned from the hill, to aid him with his counsel and advice.

"Well, Grizzel," said he, "is it a lad or a lass bairn we hae found; for I am convinced (for a' the fear it gae me), by what our elder has said, that it is nae fairy, but an unchristened wean the elves had been carryin awa frae its parents, wha, I hae nae doot, are noo mournin its loss."

"Indeed, guidman," replied Grizzel, "it is as sonsie a lass bairn as ever I saw in my life, and a's richt. It is nae fairy, I'm satisfied, and I'm richt glad on't; for she'll be a great comfort to us, now that we are getting up in years, if her ain mother doesna come to take her to her ain bosom; but o' that I think there is little chance; for, by the few words it spoke, it is nae child o' oor land."

"William Kerr," said the elder, "if, as your wife proposes, you mean to keep this child, there is one duty to perform, both for its sake and your own—and that is, it must be baptised; for there is no doubt this sacred right has either been withheld or neglected, or the enemy would not have had the power to do as he has done. To-morrow I will go myself to the minister and talk with him; and next Lord's-day you or I must present it to be admitted into the visible church, of which I pray it may be a worthy member. Are you content?"

"Far mair than content," replied the farmer; "I will rejoice, and bless God, for the occasion as fervently as if she were my ain. While I hae a bit or a bield she shall neither feel hunger nor cold."

The parties separated for the night, and the new-found stranger slept in the bosom of the farmer's wife. On the following Sabbath it was taken to the church of Minniegaff to be baptised. The church was crowded to excess.

Every one that could, by any effort, get there, attended to witness the christening of a fairy, all expecting something uncommon to occur. The farmer and his wife, they thought, were too rash to harbour it in their house, for it was not chancy to be at feud with "the good people," who, out of revenge, might shoot his cattle; and, verily, during that summer, a good many had already died of elve shots. As the christening party approached the church, every one was anxious to get a peep at the young creature. It was so beautiful that it could not, they said, be a common child; neither was it a changeling, for changelings are weazened, yammering, ill-looking things, that greet night and day, and never grow bigger. Contrary to the expectations of almost all the congregation, when the farmer and his party entered the church, the child neither screamed nor flew off in a flash of fire, but smiled as beautiful as a cherub. The service went on as usual. The farmer stood up and took the holy vows upon himself, and gave the lovely babe the name of Helen. The girl throve, and became the pride of her foster-parents, who loved her as intensely as if she had been their own child; and Colin became, if possible, more beloved by them, as Helen's playfellow.

A few months after the finding of Helen, as Grizzel was one day examining the silken dress which she wore when discovered on the muir, and which had never been put on since—being soiled and damp when taken off—she discovered a piece of paper in one of the folds, much creased, as if it had been placed there by some one in a state of great agitation. It was written in French. Neither the farmer nor herself could read it, but William, on the first opportunity, took and showed it to the minister, who translated it as follows:—"Merciful God! protect me and my child from the fury of my husband, who has returned, after his long absence, more gloomy than ever. Alas! in what have I offended him? If I have, without any intention, done so,

my dear baby, you cannot have given offence. Good God! there are preparations for a journey making in the court-yard—horse, saddle, and pillion. Where am I to be carried to? My babe! I will not be parted from you but by death. His feet are on the stairs: I hear his voice. Alas! I tremble at that sound which was once music to my soul. Holy Virgin! he approaches!" Here the writing ceased. It threw no light upon the event, further than it showed that the mother of the child was unhappy, and above the lower ranks of life. The paper William left with the minister, at his request.

The little Helen grew, and became even more lovely and engaging—the delight and joy of the farmer and his wife. Yet their happiness had in it a mixture of pain; for they never thought of her but with a fear lest, as not being their own child, she should be claimed and taken from them. Years rolled on, and Helen grew apace. She was of quick parts, and learned with facility everything she was taught —a circumstance which induced many to believe that the fairies were her private tutors. The opinion was justified by other circumstances. She was thoughtful and solitary for a child. The Eldrich Stone was her favourite haunt. She seldom joined in the sports of the other children of her age—having, indeed, little inducement; for they were always fearful of her, and felt constraint in her presence. Some of the most forward taunted her with the cognomen of Fairy Helen; and if she was successful (as she often was) in their childish sports, they left her, saying, "Who could win with a fairy?" This chilled the joyous heart of the fair Helen, and was the cause of many tears, which the kind Grizzel would kiss off with more than maternal love. As she grew up, she withdrew herself from the society of those who thus grieved her; but there was one individual who ever took her part, and boldly stood forth in her defence. This was Willie, "the widow's son," as he was familiarly called, for no one

knew his surname. He lived with an aged woman, who passed as his mother; but the more knowing females of the village said she could not, from her apparent age, bear that character. She had come there no one knew from whence, and inhabited a lone cottage with the boy. She appeared to be extremely poor, yet sought no aid from any one. William was better clad than any child in the parish, and much care had been taken in his education. She had (by the proper legitimate right) the name of being a witch. She sought not the acquaintance of her neighbours; and, when addressed by any of them, was very reserved, but civil; while the only thing that saved her from persecution was her regular and devout attendance at church, along with the child William, and the good opinion of the worthy minister. Yet this scarcely saved her; for, when anything untoward occurred in the neighbourhood, it was always laid to her charge. William was six or seven years older than Helen, and, still smarting under the taunts he had himself endured, was her champion, and none dared offer her insult in his presence. Her timid heart clung to him and loved him as a brother, and they were ever together—as he accompanied her to and from school, as if she had been his sister. He was now about eighteen, tall and athletic for his age, and of a firm and resolute mind.

It was in the autumn of the year 1688, that a strange horseman, with a servant behind him, was seen to approach the lone cottage of the widow—to dismount and enter it. He remained for several hours, during which his servant was busy purchasing a horse, and the necessary furniture for an immediate departure. Willie was afterwards seen bounding across the fields towards the house of William Kerr, which he entered, with a face beaming with joy.

"Helen," said he, "I am come to bid you farewell; for I am going to leave Minniegaff for a long time, and I could

not think of going without seeing you, and letting you know my good fortune."

Helen burst into tears, and sobbed. "O Willie!" she cried, "who will take my part when you are gone? I will have no friend left but my dear father and mother, and I will miss you so much. But it is wrong for me to be grieved for your departure, if your fortune is good." And she tried to subdue her tears.

"Yes, Helen," said he, "my fortune is good. I have found, what I hope you will soon find, a long-lost father—a parent I knew not existed. I now know that Elizabeth is not my mother, but has only had the charge of me during my father's exile in a foreign land. He is now returned with William, Prince of Orange, and is restored to his estate. I am going to London to join him, where I will often think of you, Helen. Farewell!" And clasping the weeping Helen to his bosom, he ran back to his cottage, took farewell of Elizabeth, and, full of hope and joyous expectation, soon was out of sight.

After the departure of Willie, Helen felt for long a loneliness she had never felt before. The Eldrich Stone used to be her favourite resort; but she was now much dedicated to Elizabeth, who, being left alone, became fond of her company, passing the greater part of the day in the farmer's house, but continuing as reserved and taciturn as she had always been. In vain Grizzel endeavoured to know from her who Willie's father was, or his name. All she ever would communicate was, that his was a gallant name; and the time, she hoped, was now come when he might pronounce it with the best of the land. Thus time passed on, and Willie was almost forgotten by every one save Elizabeth and Helen—the one dwelling on the loved theme with all the fondness of a parent; the other with that of a beloved brother. But no news of him had as yet reached the cottage of Elizabeth, who was now become

very frail, while Helen paid her every attention in her power.

The seasons had, for the last three years, been most unpropitious; the poor were suffering from famine, and the more wealthy were much straitened in their circumstances, and impoverished by the death of their cattle from want of fodder. In summer—if it could be called summer—when the sun was not seen for weeks together, when the whole atmosphere was surcharged by fogs, when the ground was deluged by rain, and the wind blew piercing cold, the grain that was sown did not ripen sufficiently either for food to man or seed to sow; while the cattle, seized by unknown diseases, languished and died. Money, in those distant parts, was of small avail; for none had grain to dispose of, or help to bestow upon the numerous applicants who thronged the doors of the larger farmers. Nettles, marsh mallows, and every weed that was not immediately hurtful, were eagerly sought after and devoured by the famished people.

Among all this suffering, William Kerr did not escape. The lengthened and unprecedentedly deep snowstorms were fatal to his flocks, and, before the fourth winter, he had not one left to take care of. His black cattle died, until he was equally bereft of all; and that house where plenty had always been, and from whence the beggar was never sent away hungry, was now the abode of want bordering on famine. Yet despondency never clouded his brow, and his heart was strong in Christian faith, and resigned to the will of God. Evening and morning his simple sacrifice was offered up to the throne of grace with as fervent love and adoration as in the days of his greatest prosperity; while the assiduous and gentle Helen mingled her tears with those of Grizzel, as much for the misery that was around them as their own. The winter of the fifth year had set in with unusual severity, long before its usual

time, and all that William had secured of his crop was a few bushels of oats, so black and bitter, that nothing but the extreme of hunger would have compelled a human being to have tasted the flour they produced. Their only cow—the last of six which had in former years abundantly supplied their dairy—now lean and shrunk, had long since withheld her nourishing stream. It was a beautiful animal, the pride of Helen and Grizzel, was reared upon the farm, and obeyed Helen's voice like a dog. With great exertion and assiduity she had procured for it support; but the grass did not give its wonted nourishment, being stinted and sour, and in vain was now all her care. The snow lay deep on the ground, and the animal was pining with hunger, and must inevitably die from want.

Great was the struggle, and bitter the tears they shed, before they gave consent to have their favourite put to death. Yet it was reasonable; for the carcase was requisite to sustain their own existence and that of Elizabeth, whom the good farmer had removed to his own home, lest she had died for want, or been plundered in those times of suffering and distress—when even the bands of natural affection were rent asunder by famine, and children were devouring in secret any little eatable they found, without giving a share to their more famished parents, while parents grudged a morsel to their expiring children. Thus passed another miserable winter, and death was now busy around them; numbers died from want and unwholesome food, and among the rest old Elizabeth sickened and paid the debt of nature; but, to her last moment, she never divulged to Helen, much as she loved her, any circumstance regarding Willie. Helen, indeed, in the present distress thought not of him; and when Elizabeth used to regret his neglect of her, she only remembered him as a former playfellow and generous school companion.

A few days before she died, as Helen sat by her bedside,

administering to her wants, she put forth her emaciated and withered hands, and taking Helen's, kissed them, and blessed her for the care and attention she had paid her. Pointing to a small chest in which her clothes were kept, she gave Helen the key, and requested her to open it, and bring a small ebony box to her. Helen did as desired; and, when she received the box, she opened it by touching a concealed spring. Helen looked on in amazement; for in the box were many jewels, and several valuable rings. The old woman took them out, one by one, and laid them upon the bed, in a careless manner, as if they had been of no value; then took out a small bundle of letters, which she kissed and wept over for a few moments; then, looking up, she said—

"O great Author of my being! pardon this, my last thought of earth, when my whole soul ought to be employed in thanking thee for thy mercies, and imploring pardon for my many sins. Oh, how I now lament my infirmities! —but there is still hope for even the chief of sinners, which I am, in the blood of Jesus." She then sunk overpowered upon her pillow for a time, and at length recovering, continued—"Dear Helen, when I am gone, keep these baubles to yourself. Alas! they were purchased by me by years of misery. These papers you will keep for William, should he ever return to inquire after me; if not, destroy them; you are at liberty to look over them if you choose, when I am no more. In this box you will also find a small sum in gold. When it pleases God to give his sinful creatures more favourable seasons, it will restock this present desolate farm, and in part only restore the debt of gratitude we owe a worthy man."

Helen, with tears, accepted the bequest, and restored it to the oaken chest; then kneeled by the bedside of the sufferer, and prayed with all her heart for her recovery; but the hand of death was upon Elizabeth—she fell into stupor, and never spoke again. Helen and her foster-

parents felt real sorrow at the death of their inmate, for she was a pleasant companion to a pious auditory. Though taciturn on every subject but what was of a spiritual nature, her soul became as if on fire when she conversed on her favourite theme, and a sublimity was in her language that carried away her hearers, and forced conviction upon the cold and indifferent.

As soon as the funeral was over, Helen showed to William and his wife the magnificent bequest of the old lady. Although they knew not the exact value of the gems, they knew it must be considerable; and the guineas were above two hundred. Their astonishment was great at the good fortune of Helen; for they had always thought, from her dress and humility, that Elizabeth was poor, although she never sought relief, but lived principally upon the produce of her little kailyard, and the meal she purchased each year, in the beginning of winter, along with her meat. This unexpected wealth added not to their happiness, nor in the least abated their grief for the loss of the giver. Scanty as the necessaries of life were, William Kerr was far from poor; but at this time money could not procure food in many of the distant parts of Scotland.

By strict economy, they contrived to put over the next long and dismal winter, and even to have something to spare for the more necessitous of their neighbours, in hopes that the ensuing spring would put an end to their privations; but it proved cold and barren as the others had been, and the more necessitous of the surviving population had retired to the sea-shore, to eke out a scanty subsistence by picking the shellfish from the rocks, and eating the softer sea-weeds. Often in vain the most dexterous fisher essayed his skill, and returned without a single fish; for even those had forsaken the shores of the famishing land, driven off by the storms, and the swell, and surge that for weeks together beat upon the coast.

In this, the extreme of their distress, William Kerr heard that a vessel had arrived at Stranraer with grain. Without delay he mounted his sole remaining horse, now so much reduced that it could scarce bear his weight, and set off for the port—a distance of twenty miles. Short as it was, it was late in the evening ere he arrived; and he found, to his regret, that all had been disposed of in a few hours—being dispersed about the town and immediate neighbourhood. Through much importunity, and by paying a great price, he procured a scanty supply; and next morning, laying it on his horse, went back to his home, rejoicing that he had procured it; for what he had reaped the harvest before was now nearly all consumed. As there was no appearance of the present summer being better than the preceding one, he resolved to shut up his house, and retire to Stranraer, until it should please God to remove His wrath from the land. He took this step because there he could procure subsistence for money, although the price was exorbitant.

With regret they bade adieu to the scenes of their former happiness; and, taking all their valuables and cash, locked up their home; and, with their one horse, which carried the load, accompanied by Colin, now old and blind, led by Helen, the sad procession moved on their dull and weary way. The land was desolate; it was the beginning of June, yet not a bud was to be seen; the whins showed only their gaudy yellow flowers, as if in mockery of the surrounding dreary scenes. Arrived at Stranraer, they found their situation much more comfortable; as provisions could be had there, although the prices were exorbitant. Several of the inhabitants imported grain from England and Ireland, in small quantities, for themselves and such as could purchase at the price they demanded for it—which comparatively few could; and what was thus brought was in a manner concealed, for the magistrate, by act of the Estates of Scot-

land, had the power to seize any store of grain, either in passing through the borough or concealed in it, and sell it to the people at their own price. This prevented those who could from importing it from a distance, save in small quantities.

Helen's heart bled to see the famishing multitudes wandering along the beach at high water, like shadows—so thin, so wasted—looking with longing eyes for the retreat of the tide, that they might commence their search for any shellfish they could find upon the rocks, or any other substance which the ingenuity of man could convert to food, however loathsome, to satisfy the hunger that was consuming them. There were to be seen mothers, bearing their infants—unmindful of the rain that for days poured down, more or less; and fathers, more resembling spectres than men, either upon their knees in the middle of their family, imploring Heaven for aid, or following the wave in its slow retreat to the utmost bound with anxious looks, exulting if their search procured them a few limpets or whelks.

During this tedious summer, William Kerr returned occasionally to his deserted farm; but it lay waste and uninviting, more resembling a swamp than arable land. His heart fell within him at the sight. No one had called; everything remained as it was; even the direction he had written upon his door, telling where he was to be found, remained undefaced, save by the pelting rain. Towards autumn the weather became more warm and dry, and promised a change for the better. The family, with joy, returned once more to the farm, to prepare for better seasons. As soon as they entered the cold damp house, where fire had not been kindled for many months, Colin, the faithful and sagacious dog, blind as he was, gave a feeble bark for joy, ran tottering round each well-remembered spot; then, stretching himself on his wonted lair beside the fire, which Helen was busy kindling, licked her hand as she patted his head,

stretched his limbs, gave a faint howl, and expired. All felt as if they had lost a friend.

This winter was more mild than any that had been remembered for many years, and gave token of an early and genial spring. The famine was still very severe; but hope began to appear in the faces of the most reduced and desponding. William Kerr procured seed corn from Stranraer, and distributed some among his less wealthy neighbours to sow their lands.

For eleven long years no word had been received of Willie, the widow's son, as he had been called, although he had been often the subject of discourse at William Kerr's fireside. The little ebony box had never been opened since the day of the funeral. There was now little chance of his ever returning to receive its contents, and far less of Helen's ever leaving Minniegaff in quest of him; and, as Elizabeth had allowed Helen, if she chose, to read the papers, William and Grizzel proposed that she should do so. She immediately opened it, and took out the packet, which was neatly sealed, and tied by a riband. There was no direction upon it. Having broken it open, the first paper was found to be directed "To William B—— of B——;" and ran thus:—

"My dear William,—You will not have seen this until I am in the world of spirits, and I hope the communion of saints in heaven, through Jesus our Lord. You have ever believed that I am your parent; but I am not. I am only your aunt—your father being a much younger brother, who was the delight of his mother and myself; for, from his earliest dawning of reason, his mind was of a pious turn, and we loved him as much as he was the aversion of his father. His elder brother had engrossed all his parent's love; for he was more like himself, and cared not for anything that savoured of the fear of God. My father had been a cavalier, and suffered a share of his sovereign's misfortunes, and hated the Covenanters with a perfect hatred; but he interfered not with his pious wife in her mode of worship, until your father showed an aversion, when yet a boy, to join in the profanity and revelry which he and his elder son delighted

in. It was after this that he began to storm and threaten his wife, for instilling her Puritanical notions, as he called them, into his children. We were immediately taken from her. I was sent to an aunt of his own opinion; and Andrew, your father, to the university in Paris. Your father I never heard of for some years. My mother I never saw again until she was upon her death-bed, when she gave me the jewels you will find in the box with this. Make a good use of them, and may they prove a blessing, in placing you above want, if I am taken away before you are claimed by your father, which he will do if he lives, and is allowed to return to Scotland; if not, you will be enabled to trace him out by their means. But I must proceed:—I was still residing with my father's aunt when your father returned to Scotland, bringing with him, from France, a Scottish lady of family, whom he had married there. Being very uncomfortably situated, I went to reside with him. The troubles about religion, which distracted the country, had been laying it waste for some time. Your father took a leading part for the Covenant, and joined the insurgents. The fatal battle of Bothwell Bridge was fought. Your father was dangerously wounded; but escaped. He was concealed by a faithful servant, and brought home, where we concealed him from the search that was made, until his recovery. Your mother, who was of a delicate constitution, never recovered the shock. She sickened, and died, before her husband was convalescent. Your father was obliged to fly his country in disguise; his property was confiscated, and a price set upon his head; for, though he had been seen to fall, his body had not been found. I was driven from his house, and retired to this wild as a place of security, of which I informed your father. He was, when I wrote this, at the Hague, a merchant, and wealthy. You were too young to remember any of these events, and I was as familiar in your sight as your sainted mother. If you apply to the Prince of Orange, should your father be dead, he will be your friend for his sake. ELIZABETH B——."

The next paper was a letter in a neat female hand, which had evidently been blotted by the tears either of the writer or the reader; for it was blistered in many places, and the ink effaced:—

"MY LOVING ELIZABETH,—Pity me, for my heart is

broken. I am weighed down by many sorrows, and have no one to whom I can relieve this bursting heart but you. Alas! the illusions of love are gone. I am now the aversion of my lord. I fear his love for me is fled for ever, in spite of all my endeavours to please him. At the birth of my beauteous babe, he left the castle in displeasure. Unfeeling Charles! when I expected rapture in his eye at the sight of his child, he turned from it as if he loathed it, because it was not a boy. For eighteen months he has been in London, at the court, and returned only a few weeks since. Alas! how his manner is changed! I am treated with harshness and scorn. The only consolation I have now left he threatens to deprive me of, and send her, young as she is, to a nunnery in France, and make her profess. I have been on my knees again and again to my cruel lord, to allow me to be her companion. This he sternly refuses. Oh, teach me, my dear Eliza, how I may soften his obdurate heart! for, cruel as he is, I love him still, and would die a thousand deaths rather than offend him. Had I never loved him so sincerely, I never had been so miserable. Holy Virgin, be my aid! and all the saints befriend me! I know it is not because I am an unworthy daughter of the universal church that he now has ceased to love me; for he knew I was so before we wed. He, alas! cares for nothing holy; and, in his conversation, even favours the church of my faith. Again, I implore, advise and pity me, your poor and heart-broken LOUISA B——."

The only other paper was also a letter in the same hand, as follows:—

"MY DEAR ELIZABETH,—Fate has done its worst, and my heart is not broken, neither am I distracted. I am bereft of my treasure; it was torn from me by its unnatural father, with threats and imprecations. I know no more; for nature sank under his cruelty. When I recovered, my lord—now *my* lord no longer—had left the castle. I would have followed, though I knew not whither; but I was detained a prisoner in my room, and denied the presence of every one, except strange menials he had appointed as my keepers. I have succeeded in my attempt, and am now with my uncle. I leave this land, in which I have suffered so much, for France, in search of my heart's treasure; nor will I cease my wanderings until I find my child. Farewell! perhaps for ever! LOUISA B——"

Helen and the now aged Grizzel shed tears over the sufferings of Louisa, replaced the papers, and wished that William might once more return, if it were for no more than to inquire if he could say whether his relation had found her child or not. The packet could reveal nothing to him but what he already knew.

The following summer was genial and warm, and the crops luxuriant to profusion. Nature appeared anxious to make amends for the barrenness of the preceding years. Famine had disappeared, but poverty had laid its cold hand upon many a family who before had never known want. The more fortunate William Kerr and Helen distributed their aid with a liberal hand to all around them; his farm had resumed its wonted cheerful appearance; and Helen occasionally visited the Eldrich Stone, as she went out of a summer evening to meet the worthy farmer on his return from the hill. The harvest had been gathered in, and a public thanksgiving made in all the churches for its abundance, when, towards the end of the year, the worthy old minister died, beloved and regretted by all. His executor sent to William Kerr the small piece of paper his wife had found in the clothes of Helen, with a certificate of the date and circumstances carefully written out at the time. So little had they thought of it, as of any importance, that its existence was almost forgotten. Helen put it into the same box with the papers left in her charge by Elizabeth, and thought no more of it. Happy, loving and beloved by her foster parents, she had no other wish on earth but to see them happy by contributing to their comfort. The new incumbent of the parish, a pious young man, was most assiduous in the performance of his public duties—visiting all his parishioners with a parent's care, speaking consolation to the afflicted, and soothing down any little animosities that arose among them; but it was observed that he called oftener at William Kerr's, and remained longer there, than

at any other of the houses in the parish; and it was whispered by the young maidens that Helen was, more than the old man and his wife, the inducement for these numerous and protracted visits.

The truth was, that he loved Helen, and was not looked upon by her with indifference; his many virtues had won her esteem, which is near akin to love, and she received his attentions with a secret pleasure, though no declaration of love had yet been made by him. In one of their walks, which had been protracted more than usual, they were returning homewards by the Eldrich Stone. The evening was mild and serene for the season; Helen's arm was in his. She felt no fatigue, out stopped from habit at the much-loved spot. A thought of Willie passed through her mind; a faint wish to know if he were dead or alive rose in her bosom; and her head dropped with a sigh as she thought of his being numbered with the dead. The anxious lover remarked the change; and, taking Helen by the hand, inquired, with a tremulous voice, the cause of her melancholy. The ingenuous girl laid open to him the cause, and a pang of jealousy wrung his heart as he dropped her hand. "Helen," he would have said, "you love another;" but such was the agitation of his mind, that his tongue refused utterance to his thoughts.

In silence they walked side by side to the farmer's, as if the faculty of speech had been taken from them. Contrary to his wont, the minister did not enter the gate to the enclosure, but, stopping short, wrung Helen's hand as he bade her good-night, and hurried away, before she could inquire the cause of his agitation. She burst into tears, and stood looking after him. He stopped, and with a quick step she saw him returning. She still stood in the same spot, her eyes following his every motion. Again he approached, and, leaning upon the gate where she still stood, said, in a voice almost choked—

"Helen, do you love that person?"

"As a brother I love him, and cherish his memory," the agitated Helen replied.

A groan burst from the minister, as he ran from the spot. Helen entered the house, for the first time in her life, a prey to anguish. What could be the cause of the sudden change in the manners of the minister, she was at a loss to conceive. She retired to bed, but not to rest.

For several days she saw nothing of her lover. He had never left the manse. On the Sabbath following, Helen and her parents were in their usual place in the church; but she had a shade of care upon her lovely countenance which no one had ever seen there before. Contrary to her wont, her eyes were never once directed to the pulpit; while the preacher sought her face with more than usual anxiety. Although there was a tremulousness in his voice at the commencement of the service, he preached with more than his usual eloquence and fervour.

At the conclusion of the service, the pious hearers crowded round their pastor; but it was remarked that, although William Kerr and his wife shook hands with him, Helen passed on out of the churchyard unaccompanied by him, and without being recognised. The worthy pair were not less astonished than the rest of the spectators, and wondered much what could have caused the change. On their way home, they inquired at Helen, who, without reserve, gave them an account of all that had occurred at their last interview.

The good dame smiled. "He will soon come back again," said she; "it's a good sign—only a little jealousy of Willie."

"I am sure," replied Helen, "he need not be jealous of my loving my brother; for I shall always love him as such."

Grizzel was right: in the course of the following week the minister was as much abroad as ever, and spent more than his usual time with the Kerrs. All was explained to

the satisfaction of both parties, and a mutual declaration of love followed. Helen Kerr was soon after led a bride to the manse, and became its ornament and boast. With the plenishing of the bride, the old carved oak chest of Elizabeth was also taken, the ebony box was opened, and, for the first time, her husband knew of the treasure possessed by his wife. With a playful violence he pushed it from him, and clasped her in his arms.

"Helen," said he, "you are the jewel I prize; put away from my sight these baubles. But what papers are these?"

"I am afraid to let you look upon them," said she, "for they are Willie's; and it is dangerous for me, you know, to speak of *him*."

She undid the riband, and handed them to him. He read them over with care, along with the slip of paper written in French, and compared the hand in which it was written with the two letters. Resting his head upon his hand, he mused for some time, then again compared them, and seemed lost in thought.

"Helen," said he, at length, "a strange fancy has taken possession of me—that you are, in some way or other, connected with these papers. It is so improbable, that I am greatly at a loss to conceive how it can be; yet the conviction is not the less strong upon my mind. There is a similarity in the handwriting of the letters that struck me at once. Their date, and the date of my predecessor's certificate, are very near each other; there is not a month between the first letter and the certificate; and the second letter is a short time after the date of that document. It is very strange; and God, in his good time, if agreeable to his will, may bring all to light."

About eighteen months after this conversation, Helen, one day, as was her wont, had walked over to William Kerr's, with her young son in her arms, to spend an hour or two with them, and wait until her husband called, on his

return to the manse from his visits. William had the babe in his arms, and was talking, with all the fondness of age, about its mother, when he first had her on his knees in the same chair and at the same hearth. Their attention was excited by the tramp of horses' feet approaching the house. Helen started up, and ran to the window to see who it might be. She could not recognise them: it was a gentleman in a military undress, attended by a servant. The first dismounted, and, giving his horse to the attendant, stepped hastily to the door, which he opened with the freedom of an old acquaintance, and, before she could leave the window, he was in the room. Helen recognised him at a glance.

"It is Willie, father!" she cried, in a voice of joy. "I am so happy to see you again, and well!—for we all thought you had been dead."

It was indeed Willie; but he appeared not to partake of the joy of those who greeted him with such fervour. He gazed at Helen, and then at the babe she now held in her arms, in silence; and a deep shade of disappointment clouded his brow. He had stood thus for a minute or two in silence, with a hand of each of the old people grasped in his. Helen felt awkward and abashed at his melancholy and imploring glance, and, turning from it, appeared busy with her son. Willie seated himself, and seemed as if in a fit of abstraction, his eyes still fixed on the object of his early love, and strong emotion depicted on his countenance. The sight of the child had awakened suspicions which he was not for a time able to confirm or dissipate by a simple question; and his agitation was so extreme, that no one present could call up resolution enough to explain to him how or when Helen had changed her situation. The silence was painful to all, but to none more than to Willie himself; for he could read in the looks of William and Grizzel the reason why they were unwilling to speak. They felt for

him; and Helen's eye was filled with a tear, as she looked up blushingly into the face of one who had claimed the first love offering of her virgin heart. This state of painful and too eloquent silence was put an end to by him who had most to dread from a disclosure. Starting, as if by an effort forcing himself out of a train of thoughts, he held out his finger, and pointed to the babe that was looking up smiling into the face of Helen, in whose eye the tear still stood—

"Is it possible, Helen?" said he, in a voice choking with strong emotion, and unable to get out the rest of the sentence, the meaning of which his pointed finger sufficiently indicated.

Helen was silent; the blush rose higher on her face, and the tear dropped on the face of the child. William and Grizzel looked at each other, as if each wished the other to speak.

"Speak, Helen," said Willie, partly recovering himself. "Can it be ——?" and he again faltered.

His emotion stopped still more effectually the voice of Helen, who hid her face on the breast of her child.

"Indeed, and it is just sae," at last said Grizzel. "That is Helen's bairn, and as bonny a ane it is as she was hersel when we found her by the Eldrich Stane, wi' her head restin on the side o' puir auld Colin, wha is since dead. Ah, Willie! ye hae yersel to blame; for ye never let us ken whether ye were dead or alive."

Willie drew his hand over his eyes, and was silent. There was another subject that pressed upon his heart, and one which he equally feared to broach by a question.

"And Elizabeth—my more than mother!" he ejaculated, in a broken voice—"what of her?"

"She's in the kirkyard o' Minniegaff," answered Grizzel. "The sods are again grown thegither, and the grass is hail and green owre her grave."

"Oh, did I expect to meet all this!" muttered the un

happy man, as he held his hands upon his face. There was again silence in the cottage. "Had my dear friend plenty, and was she well cared for in her last moments?" he continued, with the same broken voice.

"Nane o' us had plenty at that dreadfu time," answered Grizzel; "death was the only creature that seemed to hae aneugh. We killed auld Hawky to save the life o' puir Elizabeth; but her time was come. She died i' the fear o' God; and you, Willie, that was her only love on earth, was her last thought, as she left this warld for that better ane whar friends dinna forget their auld benefactors."

"You are unkind, Grizzel," said he, "to add to my present sorrow by the reproof contained in that hint. I have to you the appearance of being undutiful; but I was so situated that it was not in my power to communicate with her by letter; and to visit her in person was impossible. I would have been here years since, if I could have accomplished it; for I can solemnly declare my heart has been ever here."

"I believe ye, Willie," replied Grizzel. "I was owre hasty. Ye could hae dune her nae guid, even if ye had been here; for at that time the hand o' God was upon our sinfu land, and the assistance o' man was o' nae avail. But your Helen mightna hae been the minister's wife this day, if ye had been mair mindfu o' Minniegaff and yer auld friends."

The secret which was paining Willie was now fully revealed. The sad truth that he had lost her of whom he had dreamed for years in foreign lands, and to see whom he had journeyed night and day, with the hope of being blessed at the termination of his journey, was fully disclosed. With not again seeing Elizabeth, he had laid his account; but that he should lose Helen had never once entered his mind; and the intelligence, accompanied as it was with the painful vision of seeing her a mother, with the pledge of

her love for another sitting smiling on her knee, was too painful to be endured. For some time he again sat silent and moody; but the evil was of that irremediable nature that often contributes to its cure; and, as the first emotion wore off, he gratified his auditors with a statement of what had befallen himself since he left Minniegaff.

"It was with a trusty servant I left Elizabeth to join my father in London, who had come over from his long exile in the train of King William. Upon my arrival, I was received with rapture by my beloved parent, and introduced to my sovereign. Proper masters were engaged to finish my education. As soon as I was thought ready, I received a captain's commission in the army, and set out with my regiment for Ireland. I was present at the battle of the Boyne, where my uncle fell—he having joined the army of James; and my father became, by this event, the representative of the family. Being in favour with the court, the attainder was reversed. I rose rapidly, and had important trusts committed to my charge, which required my utmost vigilance. My mind was so occupied with public affairs, that I had little time for indulging in my own private feelings. I heard of the sufferings in Scotland, and wrote twice; but these letters appear not to have reached, as I received no answer. I could not send a special messenger, as I was in another country, and had no one I could with confidence trust. I was also in hopes, from year to year, of being relieved, and coming in person; and thus twelve tedious years have rolled on."

Willie had just finished, when Helen's husband entered, and was introduced by her. Willie shook hands with him, but not with that cordiality he had done with the former. There was during tea a constraint, which gradually wore off; and mutual confidence being restored, they were as open with each other and kind, as if they had long been friends. The minister said that he had papers in his possession which

Elizabeth had left in Helen's charge, and which he and Helen had read, as Elizabeth had allowed; and mentioned the strange surmises he had regarding the connection his wife had with them. Willie listened in mute astonishment, and the conflict that was passing in his mind was strongly marked upon his open and generous countenance.

"It cannot be," he said at length; "for my uncle always declared that he had sent his child to France by a trusty agent, from whence he had letters of their safe arrival. He showed these letters to the relations of his wife, my aunt-in-law, but never would inform them where he had placed her, or who the agent was. My aunt, who is still alive, has used every effort to learn its fate, in vain, and still mourns the loss of her babe."

The minister afterwards walked over to the manse and brought the papers. Willie at once recognised the handwriting as that of his aunt. Rising, he embraced Helen, kissed her cheek, and owned her for his cousin. Next morning his servant was sent off express to H—— Castle, with a packet to his aunt, who had for several years resided there—having given up her fruitless search on the Continent. In a few days she arrived at the manse, and embraced Helen as her long-lost daughter. The scrap of paper she kissed again and again, as the means of her present happiness. The silken dress in which Helen was found had been carefully preserved. She had sewed it with her own hand, and it had been last put on by herself; for Grizzel thought it too fine for her to wear. Not a doubt remained. Willie, the widow's son, joined the army again, and made a conspicuous figure in the wars of Queen Anne. Helen's mother took up her residence in the manse, and once more, in the close of her life, enjoyed that happiness in her grandchildren's infancy she had been denied in her own. The unfeigned piety and example of her daughter and her husband gradually weaned her from her early faith, which had

been much shaken, in her melancholy hours, by the studies she had pursued to solace her grief. Till her death she was a devout member of her son-in-law's flock, and is yet remembered to have been heard talked of as the Good Lady

THE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

A STORY OF WARK CASTLE.

A LITTLE above Coldstream, on the south side of the Tweed, stands the village of Wark, where a walled mound is all that remains to point out where its proud castle once stood. "We know that," some dweller on the Borders may exclaim; "but what has Wark Castle to do with the Order of the Garter?" Our answer to this question simply is, that, if tradition may be trusted, or the historian Froissart believed, but for Wark Castle, and there would have been no Order of the Garter. But this the following story will show:—It was early in the autumn of 1342 that David Bruce, King of Scotland, led an army across the Borders, and laid waste the towns and villages of Northumberland, as far as Newcastle. The invading army seized upon the cattle, the flocks, the goods, and the gold of the Northumbrians; and they were returning, overladen with spoils, when they passed within two miles of Wark Castle, which was then the property of the Earl of Salisbury. The earl was absent; but, on the highest turret of the castle, stood his countess, the peerless Joan Plantagenet, daughter of the Earl of Kent, and cousin of King Edward. Her fair cheeks glowed, and her bright eyes flashed indignation, as she beheld the long line of the Scottish army pass by, laden with the plunder of her countrymen.

"Am not I a Plantagenet?" she exclaimed—"flows not the blood of England in my veins?—and shall I tamely behold our enemies parade the spoils of my country before mine eyes? Ho! warden!" she continued, in a louder tone, "send hither Sir William Montague."

Sir William was the brother of her husband, and the governor of the castle.

"Behold!" said she, sternly, as the governor approached, and pointing towards the Scottish army. "Is it well that we should look like imprisoned doves upon yon rebel host? Or shall ye, Sir Governor, discharge your duty to your sovereign, if ye strike not one blow for England and revenge?"

"Fair sister," returned the knight, "ere an hour after nightfall, and the cry, 'For England and the Rose of Wark!' shall burst as the shout of death upon the ears of our enemies. A troop of forty horsemen wait but my word to become the messengers of vengeance."

"Good, my brother," she replied, while her former frown relaxed into a smile; "and each man who hath done his duty shall, on his return, drink a cup of wine from the hands of Joan Plantagenet."

Darkness began to gather round the turrets of the castle, and on the highest the gentle figure of the countess was still indistinctly visible; now walking round it with impatient steps, and again gazing eagerly to obtain another glance of the Scottish army, or counting the fires which sprung up along the lines where it had encamped for the night, when Sir William and forty of the garrison, mounted on fleet steeds, sallied from the gate of the outer wall.

"Our ladye speed ye, gallant hearts!" said the fair Joan, as she beheld them sweep past like a dark cloud on their work of blood.

The Scottish army were encamped a little beyond Carham, carousing around their fires from flagons filled with the best wine they had found in the cellars of the Northumbrian nobility; over the fires, suspended from poles, were skins of sheep and of bullocks, rudely sewed into the form of bags, and filled with water—these served them as pots, and the flesh of the animals was boiled in their own skins. Amongst the revellers were veterans who had fought by the side of

Wallace and Bruce; and, while some recounted the deeds of the patriot, and inspired their comrades with accounts of his lion-like courage and prodigious strength, others, with the goblet in hand, fought Bannockburn o'er again. Thus the song, the jest, the laugh, the tale of war, and the wine-cup went round, amidst the bustle of culinary preparations, and each man laid his arms aside, and gave himself up to enjoyment and security.

Suddenly there arose upon their mirth the trampling and the neighing of war-steeds, the clang of shields, and the shouts of armed men, and naked swords gleamed through the fire-light. "For England and the Rose of Wark!" exclaimed Sir William Montague—"For England and our ladye!" echoed his followers. They rushed through the Scottish lines like a whirlwind, trampling the late revellers beneath their horses' feet, and fleshing their swords in the bodies of unarmed men. For a time they left carnage behind them, and spread consternation before them.

The surprise and panic of the Scottish army, however, were of short duration. "To horse!—to horse!" rang through the camp, and they began to enclose the small but desperate band of assailants on every side.

"England is revenged! To the castle with our spoils!" cried Sir William; and they retreated towards Wark, carrying with them a hundred and sixty horses laden with plunder, while the Scots pursued them to the very gates. The countess hastened to the outer gate to meet them; and as, by the torches borne by her attendants, she surveyed the number of horses they had taken, and the rich booty which they bore—

"Thanks, Sir William!" cried she—"thanks, my gallant countrymen—ye have done bravely; merry England hath still its chivalrous and stout hearts upon the Borders. To-night shall each man pledge his ladye love in the ruddy wine."

But there was one who welcomed Sir William Montague's

return with silent tears—the gentle Madeline Aubrey, the companion of Joan Plantagenet, and the orphan daughter of a valiant knight, who had won his golden spurs by the side of the first Edward, and laid down his life in defence of his imbecile son. Madeline was, perhaps, less beautiful than the countess; but her very looks spoke love—love, ardent, tender, and sincere. Hers was the beauty of the summer moon kissing the quiet lake, when the nightingale offers up its song—lovely and serene; Joan's was as the sun flashing upon the gilded sea—receiving the morning worship of the lark, and demanding admiration.

"Wherefore are ye sad, my sweet Madeline?" said Sir William, tenderly, as he drew off his gauntlet, and took her fair hand in his. "Joy ye not that I have returned sound in life and limb?"

"Yes, I joy that my William is safe," answered Madeline; "but will our safety last? Think ye not that ye have done desperately, and that the Scottish king, with to-morrow's sun, will avenge the attack ye have made on his camp to-night?"

"St George! and I pray he may!" added Sir William. "I am the dependant of my brother, with no fortune but my sword; and I should glory, beneath the eyes of my Madeline, to win such renown as would gain a dowery worthy of her hand."

"When that hand is given," added she, "your Madeline will seek no honour but her William's heart."

"Well, sweetest," rejoined he, "I know that ye rejoice not in the tournament, nor delight in the battle-field; yet would ye mourn to see your own true knight vanquished in the one, or turn craven on the other. Let Scotland's king besiege us if he will, and then with this good sword shall I prove my love for Madeline."

"Madeline is an orphan," added she, "and the sword hath made her such. She knows your courage as she knows

your love, and she asks no farther proofs. The deed of chivalry may make the ladye proud of her knight, but it cannot win her affection."

"Well, sweet one," said he, playfully, "I should love to see thy pretty face in a monk's cowl, for thou dost preach of peace right potently. But come, love, wherefore are ye so sad—what troubles thee?"

"'Tis for you I fear," she replied. "I know your daring, and I know that danger threatens us; and oh! Madeline's hands could not deck your bosom for the battle; though, in her own breast, she would receive the stroke of death to shield it. For my sake, be not too rash; for oh! in the silent hours of midnight—when the spirits of the dead visit the earth, and the souls of the living mingle with them in dreams—I have seen my father and my mother, and they have seemed to weep over their orphan—they have called on me to follow them; and I have thought of you, and the shout of the battle, and the clash of swords have mingled in my ears; and when I would have clasped your hands, the shroud has appeared my bridal garment.

"Come, love, 'tis an idle fancy," said he, tenderly; "dream no more. But that they have mewed me up in this dull castle, where honour seeks me not, and reward awaits not, and ere now my Madeline had worn her wedding-garment. But cheer up; for your sake I will not be rash, though, for that fair brow I would win a coronet."

"'Tis an honour that I covet not," said she; "nor would I risk thy safety for a moment to wear a crown."

Madeline was right in her apprehension that King David would revenge the attack that had been made upon the rear of his army. When, with the morning sun, he beheld two hundred of his soldiers lying dead upon the ground—"Now, by my halidome," said he, "and for this outrage, I will not leave one stone of Wark Castle upon another, but its ruins shall rise as a cairn over the graves of these men."

Before noon, the entire Scottish host were encamped around the castle; and the young king sent a messenger to the gates, demanding the countess and Sir William to surrender.

"Surrender! boasting Scot!" said the chivalrous Joan; "doth your boy king think that a Plantagenet will yield to a Bruce! Back and tell him that, ere a Scot among ye enter these gates, ye shall tread Joan Plantagenet in the dust; and the bodies of the bravest of your army shall fill the ditches of the castle, that their comrades may pass over."

"I take not my answer from a woman's tongue," replied the herald; "what say ye, Sir Governor? Do ye surrender in peace, or choose ye that we raze Wark Castle with the ground?"

"If King David can, he may," was the brief and bold reply of Sir William Montague; "yet it were better for him that he should have tarried in Scotland until his beard be grown, than that he should attempt it."

"Ye speak boldly," answered the herald; "but ye shall not fare the worse, by reason of your free speech, when a passage shall be made through these walls for the Scottish army to enter."

The messenger having intimated the refusal of the governor to surrender to his prince, preparations were instantly made to commence the siege. The besieged, however, did not behold the preparations of their enemies and remain inactive. Every means of defence was got in readiness. The countess hastened from post to post, inspiring the garrison with words of heroism, and stimulating them with rewards. Even the gentle Madeline showed that her soul could rise with the occasion worthy of a soldier's love; and she, too, went from man to man, cheering them on, and with her sweet and silver tones seemed to rob even death of half its terror. Sir William's heart swelled with delight as he beheld her mild eye lighted up with enthusiasm, and heard

her voice, which was as music to his ear, giving courage to the faint-hearted, and heroism to the brave.

"Heaven bless my Madeline!" said he, taking her hand; "ye have taught me to know what true courage is, and our besiegers shall feel it. They may raze the walls of the castle with the ground, as they have threatened; but it shall be at a price that Scotland can never forget; and even then, my Madeline shall be safe. Farewell now, love, but as night gathers round, we must again prepare to assume the part of assailants."

"You must!—I know you must!" she replied; "yet be not too rash—attempt not more than a brave man ought—or all may be lost; you, too, may perish, and who, then, would protect your Madeline?"

He pressed her hand to his breast—again he cried, "Farewell!" and, hastening to a troop of horsemen who only waited his commands to sally from the gate upon the camp of their besiegers, the drawbridge was let down, and, at the head of his followers, he dashed upon the nearest point of the Scottish army. Deadly was the carnage which, for a time, they spread around; and, as they were again driven back and pursued to the gate, their own dead and their wounded were left behind. Frequently and suddenly were such sallies made, as the falcon watcheth its opportunity and darteth on its prey, and as frequently were they driven back, but never without leaving proof to the Scottish monarch at what a desperate price Wark Castle was to be purchased. Frequently, too, as they rushed forth, the countess eagerly and impatiently beheld them from the turrets; and, as the harvest-moon broke upon their armour, she seemed to watch every flash of their swords, waving her hand with exultation, or raising her voice in a strain of triumph. But by her side stood Madeline, gazing, not less eagerly, and not less interested, on the work of danger and despair; but her eyes were fixed upon one only—the young leader of the chi-

valrous band who braved death for England and their ladye's sake. She also watched the flashing of the swords; but her eyes sought those only which glanced where the brightest helmet gleamed and the proudest plume waved. Often the contest was beneath the very walls of the castle, and she could hear her lover's voice, and behold him dashing as a thunderbolt into the midst of his enemies.

Obstinate, however, as the resistance of the garrison was, and bloody as the price, indeed, seemed at which the castle was to be purchased, David had too much of the Bruce in his blood to abandon the siege. He began to fill the ditches, and he ordered engines to be prepared to batter down the walls. The ditches were filled, and, before the heavy and ponderous blows of the engines, a breach was made in the outer wall, and with a wild shout a thousand of the Scottish troops rushed into the outer court.

"Joan Plantagenet disdains ye still!" cried the dauntless countess. "Quail not, brave hearts," she exclaimed, addressing the garrison, who, with deadly aim, continued showering their arrows upon the besiegers; "before I yield, Wark Castle shall be my funeral pile!"

"And mine!" cried Sir William, as an arrow glanced from his hand, and became transfixed in the visor of one of the Scottish leaders.

Madeline glanced towards him, and her eyes, yet beaming with courage, seemed to say, "*And mine!*"

"And ours!" exclaimed the garrison—"and ours!" they repeated more vehemently; and, waving their swords, "Hurrah!" cried they, "for our ladye, St George, and merry England!"

It was the shout of valiant but despairing men. Yet, as the danger rose, and as hope became less and less, so rose the determination of the countess. She was present to animate at every place of assault. She distributed gold amongst them; her very jewels she gave in presents to the

bravest; but, though they had shed much of the best blood in the Scottish army, their defence was hopeless, and their courage could not save them. Almost their last arrow was expended, and they were repelling their assailants from the inner wall with their spears, when *Want*, the most formidable enemy of the besieged, began to assail them from within.

It was now that the gentle Madeline, when Sir William endeavoured to inspire her with hope, replied, "I fear not to die—to die with you!—but tell me not of hope—it is not to be found in the courage of the brave garrison, whom famine is depriving of their strength. There is one hope for us—only one; but it is a desperate hope, and I would rather die than risk the life of another."

"Nay, name it, dearest," said Sir William, eagerly; "and if the heart or hand of man can accomplish it, it shall be attempted."

Madeline hesitated.

"Speak, silly one," said the countess, who had overheard them—"where lies your hope? Could true knight die in nobler cause? Name it: for I wot ye have a wiser head than a bold heart."

"Name it, do, dear Madeline," entreated Sir William.

"King Edward is now in Yorkshire," she replied; "could a messenger be despatched to him, the castle might hold out until he hastened to our assistance."

"St George! and 'tis a happy thought!" replied the countess. "I have not seen my cousin Edward since we were children together; but how know ye that he is in Yorkshire? I expected that, ere now, he was conquering the hearts of the dark-eyed dames of Brittany, while his arms conquered the country."

"In dressing the wounds of the aged Scottish nobleman," answered Madeline, "who was yesterday brought into the castle, he informed me."

"What think *ye* of *your* fair ladye's plan for our deliver-

ance, good brother?" inquired the countess, addressing the governor.

"Madeline said it would be a desperate attempt," replied he, thoughtfully—"and it would, indeed, be desperate—it is impossible."

"Out on thy knighthood, man!" rejoined the countess. "Is this the far-famed chivalry of Sir William Montague? Why, it is the proposition of your own fair ladye, whom, verily, ye cannot believe chivalrous to a fault. But is it to Joan Plantagenet that ye talk of impossibilities? I will stake thee my dowery against fair Madeline's, I find a hundred men in this poor garrison ready to dare and do what you declare impossible."

"You find not *two*, fair sister," said Sir William, proudly.

"Oh, say not *one*—not *one!*" whispered Madeline, earnestly.

Upon every man in the castle did the countess urge the dangerous mission — she entreated, she threatened, she offered the most liberal, the most tempting rewards; but the boldest rejected them with dismay.

The Scottish army lay encompassing them around—their sentinels were upon the watch almost at every step, and to venture beyond the gate of the castle seemed but to meet death and to seek it.

"At midnight have my fleetest horse in readiness," said Sir William, addressing his attendant—"what no man dare, I will!"

"My brother!—thanks!—thanks!" exclaimed the countess, in a tone of joy.

Madeline clasped her hands together—her cheeks became pale—her voice faltered—she burst into tears.

"Weep not, loved one," said Sir William; "the heavens favour the enterprise which my Madeline conceived. Should the storm increase, there is hope—it is possible—it will be accomplished." And, while he yet spoke, the lightning

glared along the walls of the castle, and the loud thunder pealed over the battlements. Yet Madeline wept, and repented that she had spoken of the possibility of deliverance.

As it drew towards midnight, the terrors of the storm increased, and the fierce hail poured down in sheets and rattled upon the earth; the thunder almost incessantly roared louder and more loud; or, when it ceased, the angry wind moaned through the woods, like a chained giant in the grasp of an enemy; and the impenetrable darkness was rendered more dismal by the blue glare of the lightning flashing to and fro.

Silently the castle gate was unbarred; and Sir William, throwing himself into the saddle, dashed his spurs into the sides of his courser, which bounded off at its utmost speed, followed by the adieux of his countrymen, and the prayers and the tears of Madeline. The gate was scarce barred behind him ere he was dashing through the midst of the Scottish host. But the noise of the warring elements drowned the trampling of his horse's feet, or where they were indistinctly heard for a few moments, the sound had ceased, and the horse and its rider were invisible, ere the sentinels, who had sought refuge from the fury of the storm in the tents, could perceive them.

He passed through the Scottish lines in safety; and, proceeding by way of Morpeth and Newcastle, on the third day he reached the camp of King Edward, near Knaresborough. The gay and chivalrous monarch, at the head of a portion of his army, like a true knight, hastened to the relief of his distressed cousin.

David, however, having heard of the approach of Edward, at the head of an army more numerous than his own, and his nobles representing to him that the rich and weighty booty which they had taken in their inroad into England, together with the oxen and the horses, would be awkward encumbrances in a battle, he reluctantly abandoned the

siege of the castle, and commenced his march towards Jed Forest, about six hours before the arrival of Edward and Sir William Montague.

Madeline took the hand of her lover as he entered, and tears of silent joy fell down her cheeks; but the countess forgot to thank him, in her eagerness to display her beauty and her gratitude in the eyes of her sovereign and kinsman. The young monarch gazed, enraptured, on the fair face of his lovely cousin; and it was evident, while he gazed in her eyes, he thought not of gentle Philippa, the wife of his boyhood; nor was it less evident that she, flattered by the gallantry of her princely relative, forgot her absent husband, though in the presence of his brother. Edward, finding that it would be imprudent to follow the Scottish army into the forest, addressing the countess, said, "Our knights expected, fair coz, to have tried the fair temper of their lances on the Scottish shields, but, as it may not be, in honour of your deliverance, to-morrow we proclaim a tournament to be held in the castle-yard, when each true knight shall prove on the morion of his antagonist whose ladye-love is the fairest."

The eyes of the countess flashed joy; and she smiled, well pleased at the proposal of the sovereign; but Madeline trembled as she heard it.

Early on the following morning the castle-yard was fitted up for the tournament. The monarch and the countess were seated on a dais covered with a purple canopy, and the latter held in her hand a ring which gleamed as a morning star, and which the monarch had taken from his finger, that she might bestow it upon the victor. Near their feet sat Madeline, an unwilling spectator of the conflict. The names of the combatants were known to the pursuivants only, and each entered the lists armed with lance and spear, with their visors down, and having, for defence, a shield, a sort of cuirass, the helmet, gauntlet and gorget. Several

knights had been wounded, and many dismounted; but the interest of the day turned upon the combat of two who already had each discomfited three. They contended long and keenly; their strength, their skill, their activity seemed equal. Victory hung suspended between them.

"Our ladye!" exclaimed the monarch, rising with delight; "but they fight bravely! Who may they be? Were it not that he cannot yet be in England, I should say the knight in dark armour is Sir John Aubrey."

Madeline uttered a suppressed scream, and cast round a look of mingled agony and surprise at the monarch; but the half-stifled cry was drowned by the spectators, who, at that moment, burst into a shout; the knight in dark armour was unhorsed—his conqueror suddenly placed his lance to his breast, but as suddenly withdrew it; and, stretching out his mailed hand to the other, said, "Rise, mine equal! 'twas thy horse's fault, and none of thine, that chance gave me the victory, though I wished it much." The conqueror of the day approached the canopy beneath which the monarch and the countess sat, and, kneeling before the dais, received the ring from her hands. While she had held the splendid bauble in her hands during the contest, conscious of her own beauty, of which Border minstrel and foreign troubadour had sung, she expected, on placing it in those of the victor, to behold it in homage laid again at her feet. But it was not so. The knight, on receiving it, bowed his head, and, stepping back again, knelt before the more lowly seat of Madeline.

"Accept this, dear Madeline," whispered he; and she blushed and startled at the voice which she knew and loved. The countess cast a glance of envy on her companion as she beheld the victor at her feet; yet it was but one, which passed away as the young monarch poured his practised flatteries in her ear.

The king commanded that the two last combatants

should raise their visors. The victor, still standing by the side of Madeline, obeyed. It was Sir William Montague.

"Ha! Montague!" said the monarch, "it is you! Well, for your gallant bearing to-day, you shall accompany us to France—we shall need such hands as thine to secure the sceptre of our lawful kingdom. But what modest flower is this that ye deck with your hard-won diamond?" added he, glancing towards Madeline; and, without waiting a reply, he turned to the countess, saying, "Is she of thy suite, dear coz? She hath a fair face, worthy the handmaiden of beauty's queen."

The countess liked not his inquiries, but, nevertheless, was flattered by the compliment with which he concluded; and she replied that she was the orphan daughter of her father's friend, and the worshipful divinity of Sir William. The other combatant now approached also; and, kneeling in front of the dais, raised his visor.

"Aubrey!" exclaimed the monarch.

"My brother!" cried Madeline, starting to his side.

"Your brother?" responded Sir William.

"What! my little Madeline a woman?" replied the stranger. "Bless thee, my own sister!"

"What!" exclaimed the monarch, "the paragon of our tournament the sister of bold Aubrey? And you, too, the combatant against her chosen champion! Had ye spilled blood on either side, this day's sport might have spoiled a bridal. But whence come ye, Aubrey, and when?"

"My liege," replied the other, "having arrived at Knaresborough on the day after the departure of your majesty, I hastened hither to inform your grace that France lies open to our arms, and our troops are eager to embark."

In a few days Edward left Wark, leaving behind him a powerful garrison for the defence of the castle; but he had left it desolate to poor Madeline, for he had taken to accom-

pany him, on his invasion of France, her betrothed husband and her brother. That brother whom she had met but three days before, she had not seen from childhood—nor was she certain that he lived—for he had been a soldier from his boyhood, and his life had been spent in the camp and in foreign wars; while she had been nurtured under the protection of the Countess of Salisbury.

It was about seven years after the events we have alluded to had occurred, that Edward, covered with all the fame of a conqueror, if not the advantages of conquest, returned to England. During his victories and the din of war, however, he had not forgotten the beauty of his fair cousin, whose glances had bewildered him at Wark Castle; and now, when he returned, his admiration was renewed, and she appeared as the first favourite of his court. He had provided a royal banquet for the nobles and the knights who had distinguished themselves during the French wars. A thousand lights blazed in the noble hall—martial music pealed around—and hundreds of the brightest eyes in England looked love and delight. The fairest and the noblest in the land thronged the assembly. Jewels sparkled and studded the gorgeous apparel of the crowd. In the midst of the hall walked the gay and courtly monarch, with the fair Joan of Salisbury resting on his arm. They spoke of their first meeting at Wark, of the siege and the tournament, and again they whispered, and hands were pressed, and looks exchanged; and, while they walked together, a blue garter, decked with gold, pearls, and precious stones, and which, with a golden buckle, had fastened the sandal of the fair Joan round the best-turned ankle in the hall, became loose and entangled among her feet. The countess blushed; and the monarch, with the easy unembarrassment and politeness of a practised gallant, stooped to fasten the unfortunate riband. As the nobles beheld the sovereign kneel with the foot of the fair countess on his knee, a hardly suppressed

smile ran through the assembly. But, observing the smile upon the face of his nobles, the monarch rose proudly, and, with the garter in his hand, exclaimed, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense!*"—"Shame be to him who thinks ill of it!" and buckling the garter round his left knee, he added, "Be this the Order of St George!—and the proudest monarchs and most valiant knights in Christendom shall be proud to be honoured with the emblem of thy garter, fair coz."

Scarce, however, was the royal banquet closed, when the voice of lamentation was heard in every house, though the mourners went not about the streets; for the living feared to follow their dead to the sepulchre. The angel of death breathed upon the land; he stretched out his wings and covered it—at his breath the land sickened—beneath the shadow of his wings the people perished. The green fields became as a wilderness, and death and desolation reigned in the market-places. Along the streets moved cavalcades of the dead—the hearse of the noble and the car of the citizen; and the dead bodies of the poor were picked up upon the streets! The churchyards rose as hills, and fields were turned up for the dead! The husband fled from his dying wife; the mother feared to kiss her own child; and the bridegroom turned in terror from her who was to have been his bride upon the morn. There was no cry heard but "The dead!—the dead!" The plague walked in silence, sweeping its millions from the earth, laughing at the noisy slaughter of the sword, making kings to tremble, and trampling upon conquerors as dust.

Such was the state of London, when Sir William Montague and Sir John Aubrey arrived from France. In every street they met the long trains of the dead being borne to their grave; but the living had deserted them; and, if they met an occasional passenger, fear and paleness were upon his face. They hurried along the streets in silence—for each could have concealed his thoughts from the other—but the

thoughts of both were of Madeline; and the one trembled lest he should find his betrothed, the other his sister, with the dead! They proceeded to the house of the Duchess of Salisbury; but they were told that she had fled, to seek a place of refuge from the destroying glance of the pestilence. From the domestics, however, they learned that Madeline had ceased to be the companion of the duchess; but they were also directed where they would find her, with a friend in the city—if she yet lived! But, added their informants, they had heard that, in the street which they named, the inhabitants died faster than the living could bury them. When the haughty Joan became the acknowledged favourite of the king, she was no longer a meet friend or protector to the gentle Madeline; and the latter had taken up her residence in the house of a merchant, who, in his youth, had fought by her father's side; and where, if she enjoyed not the splendour and the luxuries of wealth, neither was she clothed with the trappings of shame.

With anxious steps the betrothed husband and the brother hastened to the dwelling of the merchant. They reached it.

"Doth Madeline Aubrey reside here?" inquired they in the same breath. "Does she live?—does she live?"

"She doth reside here," answered the citizen, "and—the saints be praised!—good Madeline hath escaped, with my whole house; and I believe it is for her sake, though she feareth no more the breath of the pestilence, than though it were healthsome as the summer breeze bearing the fragrance of the May-thorn. But, belike, ye would speak with her, gentlemen—ye may step in, good sirs, and wait till her return."

Her brother started back.

"Gracious Heaven! can my Madeline be abroad at a time like this!" exclaimed Sir William, "when men tremble

to meet each other, and the hands of friends convey contagion! Can ye inform us, good man, where we shall find her?"

"Nay, that I cannot," answered he; "for, as I have told ye, sweet Madeline feareth not the plague, but walketh abroad as though it existed not; and now, doubtless, she is soothing the afflicted, or handing a cup of water to the dying stranger, whom his own kindred have fled from and forsaken, when the evil came upon him. But, as ye seem acquainted with her, will not ye tarry till she come?"

They gazed towards each other with horror and with fear; yet, in the midst of their apprehensions and dismay, each admired the more than courage of her of whom Joan Plantagenet had said that she had more wisdom of head than boldness of heart. They entered the house, and they sat down together in silence. Slowly, wearily the moments passed on, each strengthening anxiety, each pregnant with agony.

"She may never return!" groaned Sir William; "for the healthy have been smitten down upon the streets; and the wretched hirelings, who make a harvest of death, have borne to the same grave the dying with the dead!"

At length a light footstep was heard upon the stairs. They started to their feet. The door opened, and Madeline, more beautiful than ever they had beheld her, stood before them.

"My own!—my Madeline!" cried Sir William, hastening to meet her.

"My sister!" exclaimed her brother.

Her head rested on the bosom of those she loved; and, in the rapture of the moment, the pestilence and the desolation that reigned around were forgotten. At length, the danger to which she had exposed herself recurring to his mind—

"Let us flee from this horrid charnel-house, dearest,"

said Sir William, "to where our bridal may not be mingled with sights of wo, and where the pestilence pursueth not its victims. Come, my own—my betrothed—my Madeline, let us haste away."

"Wherefore would my William fly?" said she—and a smile of joy and of confidence played upon her lips; "have ye not defied death from the sword and the spear, and braved it as it sped with the swift-flying arrow, and would ye turn and flee from the pestilence which worketh only what the sword performs, and what chivalry requires as a sacrifice to the madness of woman's folly? But whither would you flee to escape it? Be it south or north, it is there; and east or west, it is there also. If ye flee from the pestilence, would ye flee also from the eye of Him who sends it?"

Again they urged her to leave the city; and again she endeavoured to smile; but it died languidly on her lip—the rose on her cheek vanished, and her mild eyes in a moment became dim. She sank her head upon the bosom of her lover, and her hand rested on the shoulder of her brother. The contagion had entered her heart. A darkening spot gathered upon her fair cheek—it was the shadow of the finger of death—the seal of eternity!

"My Madeline!" cried Sir William. "Merciful Heaven! —spare her! spare her!"

"Oh, my sister!" exclaimed her brother, "have I hastened to my native land, but to behold thee die?"

She feebly pressed their hands in hers—"Leave me—leave me, loved ones!—my William!—my brother!—flee from me!—there is death in the touch of your Madeline!—We shall meet again!"

The disease which at that time desolated England was in some respects peculiar, even as a plague. The dark spots which so clearly indicated the presence of the spoiler began in a mere darkening of some part of the body; but so viru-

lent was the disease, and so rapid its onset and course, that even a visiter might perceive the beginning, and mark the progress towards death, during the short period of a call.

The plague-spot darkened on the cheek of Madeline Aubrey, and, in a few hours, she was numbered with its victims.

END OF VOL. XIV

Manchester: Printed by A. Ireland & Co., Pall Mall Court.

UNIVERSITY OF CA. RIVERSIDE LIBRARY
3 1210 01222 9546

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
AA 000 622 359 8

8-55

PR5850
W2W5
v.7